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THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

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on 02 July, 2018

LETTERS

ON THE

ENGLISH NATION:

BY

BATISTA ANGELONI,

A JESUIT,

Who resided many years in LONDON.

Translated from the Original ITALIAN,

BY THE

83707

AUTHOR of the MARRIAGE ACT a Novel.

Cato in tantis reipublicæ periculis non dissolutum videri. CICERO in Catalinam.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
Printed in the Year MDCCLI.

00083707

TO

The moſt high, puiſſant, and noble Prince * * * * * *,

Duke of * * * * * *,

Marquis of * * * * * *,

&c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

THE pleaſure which attends this dedication to your Grace, is of ſo ſingular a nature, that very few writers, I imagine have ever poſſeſſed the like felicity. It is no leſs, my Lord, than a power of ſhewing how totally the letters of this papiſt which I have tranſlated, are diveſted of

all foundation of truth, in the obſervations which they contain.

IT is too frequently the hard fate of writers, my Lord, to be obliged to tranſlate the works of authors which they do not approve, and contradict the ſentiments of their hearts thro' a long work in every line which flows from their pen.

THIS, my Lord, tho' it may unhappily fall to my ſhare, I cannot let paſs unobſerved, as too many Britiſh tranſlators might have careleſsly done: I intend therefore to ſhew with the beſt abilities, which ſo ſhort a ſpace will allow me, the falſities of his obſervations, by the recital of a very few of your Grace's virtues, actions, and excellencies; and thus oppoſe experience to ſpeculation.

YET, my Lord, I implore you to believe, that this deſign ariſes entirely from

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a full conviction of the truth of what I ſhall deliver, and not from any idea, partially entertained in your favour; at the ſame time I aſſure your Grace, that it does not ſpring from any baſe inclination of flattering you; the truth of which I am convinced you will have the goodneſs to believe before you have read thro' this addreſs; but from a laudable deſire of doing ſtrict juſtice to your unparallell'd parts, and ſingular character, which I am fully aſſured no age has yet produced an equal to, and no future———; but let me not pretend to dive into the receſſes of futurity, a ſudden turn of thought towards the court of the heir apparent inclines me to believe, that your Grace may leave a ſucceſſor equal to yourſelf in all the high arts, and accompliſhments of governing.

In this dedication to your Grace, I am made peculiarly happy by the two moſt delectable ideas, which can attend

the human mind; the pleaſure of doing you juſtice, in convincing the world of the errors, miſtakes, and blunders, which this papiſt has aſſerted, and giving eaſe to my own conſcience, which would not permit me to ſleep in peace, till I had declared to you and my country, the true difference which exiſts between my manner of thinking, and that of the original author.

THIS dedication, however, I implore your Grace to receive as an haſty ſketch of ſome future deſign, and not as any thing pretended to be finiſhed; as a hint of what people ought to think of you, rather than a deſcription of your full glories; ſomething that my heart pants to complete with all poſſible truth and expedition; ſo, that there may not remain a ſingle doubt in any one breaſt of this iſland, of the real extent of your capacity, and of the true uſe which you have proved to your country in peace and war.

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ONE of the firſt aſſertions of this catholic writer, my Lord, is, That the Whig idea, of every man's poſſeſſing a right of deciding for himſelf in matters of religion, is deſtructive of true liberty, and muſt, from the love of power ſo natural to man, terminate, in making a miniſter abſolute.

NOTHING is ſo apt to deceive, my Lord, as ſpeculative reaſoning; the web of which is finely ſpun from arguments à priori, where men pretend to draw from cauſes thoſe conſequences which experience teaches us are never to be found in the ſequel: in this manner was this author deceived.

BUT permit me, my Lord, without ſuſpicion of adulation, to draw a moſt illuſtrious inſtance of this truth from the

behaviour of your Grace, and many other conſpicuous Whigs.

CAN it ever be forgotten, my Lord, by the ——— and people of England, with what amazing modeſty, reſignation, and humility, your Grace, accompanied with many other complete Whigs, offered to reſign into the hands of your Maſter, all the high offices, poſts, charges, honors, and advantages you enjoy'd, in preference of one ſuperior underſtanding, which he intended to take to his councils.

IN this, did you not glorioufly determine to ſacrifice all private intereſt, and relinquiſh all particular advantage? And this, my Lord, at a time when rebellion was in the land, your maſter engaged in a war on the continent, and the money-jobbers of the city refuſed to lend the ſupplies to every one but you, even at this inſtant when it was ſcarce poſſible for his

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——— to diſplace you. Such was the conſciouſneſs of your own worth, obedience to your Maſter, and promotion of your country's weal, that you would unanimouſly have ſurrendered all poſts, honors and profits into his hands, on the account of one man, univerſally acknowledged of greater underſtanding.

CAN ſuch aſtoniſhing reſignation, and diſintereſted actions, ſpring from the love of power? ſhall Whigs hereafter be ſtigmatized with arbitrary diſpoſitions, when no reign can produce one inſtance of equal humility and ſubjection in a miniſter?

THUS, my Lord, this ſingle inſtance is ſufficient to demonſtrate the falſehood of this papiſt's aſſertion; it proves that the practice of a Whig manifeſtly contradicts his ſpeculative conceptions; that humility, modeſty, reſignation, and duty, are the effects

effects of thoſe cauſes and principles, which he aſſerted would generate pride, arrogance, diſobedience, and uſurpation. Here, my Lord, give me leave to rejoyce with you, in producing this happy proof of experience, which ſo thoroughly clears you and all Whigs, from the malicious inſinuations that are contained in this popiſh author; ſince the firſt annals of the Britiſh empire, it could never be ſaid with ſo much truth as at preſent, The king can do no wrong.

With what piety does your Grace preſerve gray hairs, and declining life, from that fatigue which attends looking into public affairs; and diſpoſe of all things without diſturbing the quiet of his days? With what wonderful invention do you deviſe means to keep that intelligence which would diſpleaſe him, from his eyes, and lull him with tales of more amuſing circumſtances?

THE care and pain of diſtributing all things, either honorary, or lucrative, your Grace has ſo prudently eaſed your Maſter's hands of, that in all the late changes and appointments of his ſervants, the very letters which compoſe his title, were never heard amongſt the people.

IT is ſaid, his Grace has given the poſt of **** to the honourable ****; the office of **** to the right honorable *****; the garter to the moſt high and puiſſant ****. So tender are you in troubling his repoſe; thus are you at once the nurſe of *****, and people grown old and paſt the vigor of their lives.

NOR is the ——— alone indebted to your Grace for the immenſe care you have ſhewn, in exonerating his ſhoulders of the weight of reigning; did not his ſon prove an equal inſtance of your attention,

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to his eaſe alſo? with the moſt becoming modeſty you decently contrived to ſupplant him at that univerſity, over which he wiſhed to preſide; even contrary to his will you procured yourſelf to be elected head of that place, and bravely dared his diſpleaſure, to ſave him from the trouble which attends ſuch a charge? Can the preſent ſon forget your affection for his departed ſire? Can you fail of continued honors from him, who have thus alike politely treated his father and grand-father? Will he not hereafter ſhew his ſenſe of theſe proceedings? How ridiculous then to aſſert, that the preſent adminiſtration of affairs requires the principles of a Tory, to preſerve the king's prerogative, and peoples rights, from the ambitious views of a Whig-adminiſtration.

In matters relating to religion, my Lord, give me leave to obſerve, that this author is equally miſtaken, as he is in thoſe

thoſe of the Whig-principles. But when we conſider him as a papiſt, bred under the darkneſs of Jeſuitiſm, in a land of ſlavery and church-deſpotiſm, imbibing prejudices from infancy by this education; it is not much to be wonder'd at, that the paths which you purſue in policy ſhould be incomprehenſible to his circumſcribed conception.

"RELIGION, my Lord, may be allowed in Italy, in a land of arbitrary power; it may form one part of government where men are born ſlaves, compoſed of all the depreciating faculties and paſſions, that diſgrace human nature: in that country indeed, the belief of a God, and of future rewards and puniſhments, may be of public utility, and neceſſary to influence the lives of the inhabitants.

BUT in Britain, a land of liberty, where the innocent natives are almoſt returned

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to a ſtate of nature, can a man be ſaid to be truly free, whoſe daſtard ſoul dreads the offending his creator; or, who is harraſſed by the ſlaviſh apprehenſions of puniſhment in another world, for actions which his conſtitution continually prompts him to commit in this.

How ought we then to congratulate each other, that ſuch humiliating tenets have been totally extirpated during your adminiſtration? Right reaſon, the love of virtue, moral rectitude, and the fitneſs of things, are the ſole motives which influence the nobler parts of a Briton's mind: you alone are the terror of the guilty.

In all commercial ſtates, my Lord, it has been ever allowed the diſtinguiſhing mark of a legiſlator and ſtateſman, to encourage thoſe kinds of commerce, where the original materials are of the leaſt worth, and the chief value of the commodities ariſes from the labour of the people; in this

this art, your Grace, and your immortal predeceſſor, have excelled all the ſons of men. You have created a gainful merchandize without labour, from materials of no value.

To inſtance in one reſpect only; what was the ſingle article of conſcience worth in this kingdom, before your adminiſtration? the utmoſt that could be ſaid in favour of the beſt was, that it gave a man a chearful countenance, and made his ſlumbers ſweet and eaſy. But, did it ſate the hungry appetite, or clothe the naked limbs of virtue in diſtreſs? Of what uſe was it then to the poſſeſſor?

Since your prudential, and virtuous adminiſtration, how conſpicuous is the change? Not a little borough remains in England, where the very worſt of all conſciences may not be ſold once in ſeven years, for what is ſufficient to ſuſtain a moderate family during that time; of ſuch increaſed

value has that trifle been made thro' all England, during your ſuperintendance of the nation's welfare; and tho' your Grace cannot be ſaid to be the firſt dealer in this commodity, to your immortal honor it muſt be allowed, that you have more than trebled its value, ſince you have taken it under your protection, and voluntarily condeſcended to be conſtantly choſen maſter of that company which are the greateſt traders in that merchandize.

How great then are the obligations which ſtarving virtue owes to your charitable diſpoſition? What thanks are due to ſuch public ſpiritedneſs, and care for poverty in diſtreſs? When will the ſtupid people repay you as you deſerve

Nor is your public-ſpirited diſpoſition confined to this country alone; the neighbouring iſle, which depends on this kingdom, has felt the auſpicious influence; the judicious protection which you gave

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to a certain favorite, has created ſuch a marvellous ſpirit of patriotiſm, as cannot be equalled in all ancient ſtory; what floods of claret have been exhauſted in loyal healths to his majeſty, by this your prudent management? To what degree muſt a miniſter beloved, when one ſingle action can produce ſuch an univerſal ſpirit of patriotiſm in a nation? Would you not ſuſpect me of adulation, if I ſhould deliver my real ſentiments to your Grace? Can ſuch a people ever be tempted to revolt againſt this darling miniſter?

YET to your eternal fame, this ſpirit reſts not there: the commands which have been given to the governors of the Britiſh plantations, particularly New-York, have created an equal eſteem for you in that country; the ſingular mildneſs of expreſſion in their ſpeeches; and the ſacredneſs, with which you obſerved your promiſes made, during the laſt war, have united the inhabitants univerſally in one

paſſion, ſentiment, and opinion towards you. There is ſcarce an iſland or colony where the Britiſh power preſides, which is not filled with admiration of the governors you ſend, and of you who ſend them. Never was there an union at home and abroad, in the judgment of all ranks and degrees, concerning the miniſterial abilities of any man, equal to that which is to be found in their opinions of your Grace.

How thankfully will the Americans receive the twelve-hundred ſoldiers, which you are ſending to their aid? How equal to the taſk of deſtroying the ſettlements of Canada and Miſſiſſippi, is this military force? Which, conſidering the ſuperiority of Britiſh courage, and ſkill of its officers, to thoſe of France, and that the French are but ten thouſand ſeven-hundred regular troops (not quite ten to one); what probability is there that they can look us in the face, and how feaſable is the project of driving them out of the American continent?

INDEED, my Lord, the Americans are a hard-headed and ſtubborn race, deſcended from thoſe fathers, who are great enemies to miniſters; they have ſhewn in the late wars that they dare to fight, and will follow no leaders but thoſe born in their own country: for this reaſon it may be preſumed you have ſent them officers from this kingdom, leſt being innured to martial affairs under their own countrymen, they may declare themſelves independent.

BY this ſingle thought you have fully contrived, that they ſhall raiſe no army, and thrown the blame on the planters, who will not inliſt under the natives of England.

THUS you have preſerved yourſelf from all impeachment of neglect, in ſuccouring the Americans, prevented a war, and

given no umbrage to the French government.

THIS appears to me the moſt machivilian and refined ſtretch of all human policy.

NOTHING, my Lord, is ſo common amongſt men of feeble underſtanding, as to form judgments, and found prejudices on the maxims and manners of their illuſtrious anceſtors; becauſe Horace, Juvenal, and other ancient Greek, and Latin writers of immortal honor, exclaimed againſt informers as the moſt deteſted race of men, they would infer, that your attention to theſe miſcreants, is highly culpable.

BUT alas! ſuch is their ſhort-ſighted ken into your policy, ſo abſolutely different from that of Minos, Solon, Lycurgus, and Numa, thoſe drivelers in the old ſyſtems of government, that they do not perceive

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one excellence in your new and unprecidented manner of governing.

WILL any man dare to condemn this inclination in your Grace, who has heard of that bloody rebellion ſo deſtructive to this nation, which was carried on by three drunken boys in the univerſity of Oxford; or of that plot, which makes every chriſtian's blood run cold with horror at the recital of it; that horrid plot, which was like to prove ſo deſtructive to all England, becauſe it was ſo ſecretly conducted, ſo ſecretly concealed in rags, that all men of ſenſe believe, it had never been diſcovered but for him that invented it; can ſuch diſcoverers be denominated informers, too well rewarded, or too highly diſtinguiſhed? Can you be too much adored, for thus watching over the ſleeping nation

YET, give me leave to obſerve, that this malicious papiſtical author, has not

penetrated into the true deſign of your Grace; in this behaviour, no man has manifeſted more indignation againſt theſe peſts of ſociety than yourſelf.

YOUR Grace knows as well as any man living (being moſt extremely profound in the knowledge of paſt and preſent hiſtory, the manners of ancient and modern kingdoms, and the ſyſtems of all former legiſlators) that it has ever been the undeviating cuſtom for all honeſt men to conſider ſuch traiterous and degenerate beings, as fellows branded in the forehead with the infamous mark of information.

THIS then muſt of conſequence make them deteſted, and ſhun'd by all honeſt company. The felon, burnt in the hand, bears that ſtigma, which muſt for ever prevent his being employed by all virtuous people; thus obliged to continue the ſame impious employment, at laſt the gallows

gallows terminates his illuſtrious race of glory.

In like manner the informer, deteſted and excluded from all virtuous ſociety, marked in his face by the feelings of his conſcience, muſt naturally have wanted bread, and continued in the ſame execrable employ, if your ſuperlative prudence had not placed him above neceſſity; and thus charitably, virtuouſly, honorably, conſcientiouſly, and chriſtianly, prevented him from all future inclination to treachery and information. How exalted then is your conception in this inſtance of refined policy? How effectually are theſe miſcreants withheld from all future inſidious deſigns againſt their fellow-creatures? How abſolutely are all others diſcouraged from attempting the like baſeneſs, leſt like too many of late, they ſhould be exalted to ſome high ſtation, and thus become a conſpicuous and flagrant object of the public ſcorn? How new, un-

common, and deciſive is this your manner of ſuppreſſing this execrable race of informers!

MINISTERS, my Lord, have frequently met with unſuitable returns from the people, whoſe happineſs they ſuperintended; but no one has ever received uſage ſo unequal to his deſerts, as your Grace: your eye, ever watchful over the morals and religion of the ſubjects, (witneſs the many laws, which have been made in their favour during your adminiſtration) could not behold the declining cauſe of Chriſt without much ſecret very ſecret grief, and repining; inſtigated by this decay, you piouſly determined to recall the languiſhing ſtate of chriſtianity, by intending intimately to mix the Jews, the choſen people of heaven, with this nation. What ſanguine hopes did this beget of reſtoring the chriſtian religion? How would morality have been improved by this race, ſo remarkable

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for the ſtrict obſervance of it all over Europe?

THIS law, which was to give them the civil rights of chriſtians, to encourage their coming hither, in your harangues you inſiſted to be of the utmoſt public utility; you told us, it was made to mend the people, and then you ſaid it was revoked to pleaſe the people; it was created with vigor, becauſe it was a moſt excellent law, and it was ſuddenly abrogated, becauſe it was never proved to the contrary: how refined is this policy! how convincing is the manner of reaſoning! new and unknown to our mole-eyed anceſtors; how few mortals can diſcern your exquiſite deſigns in civil inſtitutions?

ANOTHER law, my Lord, has alſo with equal injuſtice been exclaimed againſt; it is that, which has been made againſt clandeſtine marriage.

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SHALL young people, my Lord, actuated with the paſſions which God only has given them, be permitted to chuſe partners for life, becauſe they love each other, and it is a matter which relates chiefly to their happineſs? Where then is the wiſdom which grey hairs afford to age, and the diſcretion which ſeventy imparts to judgments in love-affairs, when they no longer taſte the leaſt remain of that ſeductive paſſion?

IN this, my Lord, this author has been equally miſtaken, as in all his former remarks; he does not conceive, that miniſters are obliged too frequently to diſguiſe their true deſigns from vulgar eyes and common obſervation, to make one object paſs for another, and conceal truth by ſpecious appearances.

IT has been too long, my Lord, a juſt complaint, that the inferior clergy of this land

land ſtarved in learning, penury, and neglect, whilſt the unlettered and dignified wallowed in pleaſure and exceſs; that the pious and humane curate, who officiated in his duty with decency, was ſcarce clothed as he ought; his rector, like Dives, faired ſumptuouſly every day, clad in fine linnen.

THIS complaint, by one ſuperior ſtroke, is at laſt effectually removed by this piouſly intended law; the diſtreſſed curates will all ſpeedily be provided for in America, and incumbents obliged to do their duty themſelves: thus, there will no more remain that object of reproach on thoſe, who have neglected the clergy.

BUT, my Lord, it was neceſſary to conceal this your intention for the eſtabliſhed clergy, from the jealous eyes of preſbyterians, leſt this kindneſs, ſo partially ſhewn to them, ſhould wean their affections from you,

you, which you are conſcious they always withdrew on the leaſt neglect, and thus deprive you of that kind of aſſiſtance, which is not to be expected from thoſe of the eſtabliſhed religion. With what addreſs was this your pious deſign diſguiſed in this law? How apparently does it prove, that the eſtabliſhed church, and her ſons are your peculiar care!

NEVER ſince the beginning of things, was there a more unjuſt allegation againſt man, than this which has been aſſerted, that you are an enemy to liberty. When alas! ſo true is the contrary of this aſſertion, that there are public aſſemblies permitted and undiſturbed, where full liberty is allowed to diſpute the exiſtence of that God which forms the object of the national religion.

YE ingrates, how can this allegation proceed from your lips? is not this a liberty unknown,

unknown, and unallowed in any nation, pagan or chriſtian, to this day.

How can it be aſſerted, that your Grace intends to deſtroy liberty, who have given no bounds to it? How can you be ſaid to be the enemy of the chriſtian religion, who have allowed ſuch freedom in ſearching into its truths?

Indeed (your Grace will pardon this ſeeming flattery) you reſemble your Creator in nothing, ſo much as in that liberty which was firſt given to our parents in Eden, to eat of the fruit of all trees but one; in like manner, free liberty is given to pluck from the ——— religion, laws, public and private property and character; the tree of knowledge was the only interdicted thing in Paradiſe; the examination of your policy, in Britain; two things which, tho' totally unlike, are yet my Lord, equally myſtical and inexplicable: can this

this ſingle reſtriction be deemed a breach of liberty?

MY Lord, there are many which accuſe you with ſtrange deſigns againſt your country's welfare: ſurely nothing was ever done with equal injuſtice; I am convinced that it would be extremely eaſy for me to prove, that you have been totally void of all deſign, thro' the whole tenour of your adminiſtration; your very enemies the French, have ever been ſtrictly convinced of this truth.

AND here, my Lord, I ſpeak from certain knowledge, and therefore, the more boldly aſſert, that no Britiſh miniſter ever poſſeſſed an equal intereſt in the opinion of the French king and his miniſtry; nay, ſuch is the regard which they profeſs for you, that ſhould any popular attempt remove you from your maſter's ear and council, I am thoroughly convinced, that not only the moſt chriſtian king, but his whole court, would unite in one petition for your being

being reſtored to his favour, and your honors; ſuch intereſting impreſſion you have created in the hearts of your very enemies: your preſents are the moſt acceptable, of all thoſe which arrive at Belle Veue; the marchioneſs never fails of ſmiling at the mention of your name, your actions afford the ſubject of many a pleaſant converſation, between this lady and her royal lover; ſhe dignifies you with the name of the moſt chriſtian miniſter, who having been ſmitten on one cheek, have turned to them, ſhe ſays, the other alſo; nay, a ſtory of you will create a laugh of approbation, in the moſt melancholy hours of his majeſty, when every other attempt has proved abortive; ſuch is your power and intereſt, in the nation of our natural enemies.

It is a melancholy conſideration, my Lord, that men in high ſtations can no more avoid the ſcourge of calumny, than they can exiſt without food; it is there-

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fore the more to be admired, that ſo little a ſhare has fallen on your Grace. The Tories are eternally exclaiming againſt the inattention which you have ſhewn to forming a militia, and this Papiſtical author has joined in the clamour.

BUT, my Lord, in this inſtance, as in all the preceding, they do not penetrate your true deſign, and manner of governing; ſhall the brave peaſants of Britain conceive, becauſe they are naked and unarmed, that they are not a match for the regular troops of the French monarch? Shall we free born Engliſh, intimate the leaſt appearance of timidity? what ill-judged temerity would that be, which the Tories call prudence? ſhould your Grace arm and diſcipline the peaſants of this land, would not this miſtaken prudence be conſtrued by the French, as an apprehenſion of an invaſion from that nation, and conſequently, would they not invade us thus armed

and

and equipt, becauſe of theſe tokens of fear; this they will never dare to attempt, whilſt they ſee us unarmed and unafraid? What raſhneſs then, to confeſs ſuch daſtard diſpoſitions, by providing ourſelves with arms, and thus, as it were challenging them to invade us.

BESIDES, my Lord, the great excellence of a miniſter is, to be thoroughly acquainted with the manners, and way of thinking, of thoſe nations with whom he is engaged; the indiſputed characteriſtic of the French nation is politeneſs; will theſe polite people then violate that character, and come hither armed, to a nation that is diſarmed, and in no condition to receive them? or, if we ſhould arm ourſelves, would not they immediately, actuated by the ſame polite ſpirit, pay us a viſit becauſe we ſeem to be prepared to receive them as we ought.

THIS, my Lord, is another aſtoniſhing inſtance of that uncommon penetration, which you abound in above all men, a ſample of that exquiſitely curious manner of governing, and ſaving the nation's money, abſolutely unknown to our thick-ſighted anceſtors; the kingdom is ſafe from all invaſions, from the nature of our enemies, why then a military power to prevent an invaſion which cannot happen? Thus you have moſt admirably tranſmuted that which has been hitherto ſarcaſtically ſtyled the moſt palpable neglect, into the moſt refined policy, a policy, my Lord, equally refined and perſpicuous in all its parts, with this laſt inſtance that I have mentioned.

THERE is yet another imputation againſt your Grace, which, with his uſual injuſtice, this writer has thrown upon you; it is my Lord, the inattention which you

have ſhewn, towards providing for men of genius and learning. My Lord, I can produce almoſt numberleſs inſtances of the great proviſion which you have made for the moſt ſtupid, unlettered, and worthleſs of God's creation; can it be conceived then, that this can ariſe from any thing, but ignorance where true merit is to be found? if your Grace could diſcover where it lyes, is it to be imagined, that informers would be preferred to men of honor, the ſons of dullneſs to thoſe of genius, vice to virtue, impudence to modeſty, deceit to integrity, irreligion to piety? with what injuſtice then is this imputed as a crime to your Grace, who are by nature and ſituation, out of all power of diſtinguiſhing the difference. Can any man who ſhines ſo eminently, in all the parts of a miniſter, be ſo deficient in this of a man, unleſs the true diſtinction of merit and demerit, was totally concealed from him?

IF there be any one thing, my Lord, in which the works of the author which I have tranſlated, ſeem to coincide with the conduct of your adminiſtration, it is in the following inſtances:

THAT the regal power in future times, may poſſible become too feeble, and religion loſe its influence thro' neglect of external objects, which may ſtrongly actuate the minds of men.

IN conſequence of this opinion, it may be humbly preſumed, that men who are known to acquieſce in favour of theſe ſentiments, are made the ſuperintendants of the ——— of ——— and the reſt of the ——— ——— How miraculouſly provident are you in all things! you ſee into diſtant futurity with the ſame perſpicuity, that you behold thoſe objects which are preſent to your eyes.

THESE, my Lord, and a thouſand other inſtances I could produce, equally convincing how much your miniſterial judgment is to be admired, beyond all that has ever been found in the adminiſtration of former ſtateſmen; your wars conducted, and peace concluded, in a manner the moſt amazing to all Europe; your ſkill in encouraging trade by promoting public companies; your increaſing the national wealth by making paper equal in value with gold, the former of which we are not likely to want, and may remain in this land, after every duſt of the latter is exported to Germany, and the Eaſt Indies.

THUS, my Lord, I hope that I have advanced a great way towards reconciling the minds of thoſe who have been miſtaken, into one opinion of you; and ſhewn, how truly your adminiſtration differs from the remarks of this blinded Papiſt.

YET as it is probable, my Lord, tho' this may have great influence on your friends, that your enemies may ſtill perſiſt in their obſtinacy of opinion, regarding your Grace; I intend to ſhew the true and eſſential difference between the times of Charles the firſt and the preſent, between the then Lord Strafford and your Grace; draw a compariſon of his underſtanding and your Grace's, your virtues and his, his miniſterial conduct and yours, the crimes imputed to him and you, the diſpoſition of Engliſhmen at that time and at preſent, your parliamentary knowledge and that of that nobleman, the taxes levied then and now, and ſhew the national incumbrance at each time: thro' the whole examination I ſhall endeavour to ſtrip off the deluſive ſurface, which covered the kingdom at that period, and compare it nakedly and impartially with this; and then analizing the different times and manners, the cauſes of

applauſe

applauſe and reſentment, the falſehood of his and truth of your adminiſtration, endeavour to aſſign the true reaſons which may juſtify a nation in executing a miniſter.

IN the execution of this deſign, I muſt neceſſarily bring before the public eye, the paſt conduct of your Grace's life; and then I make no doubt that every man from the compariſon will be truly convinced of the eſſential difference which exiſts between you, and render your Grace exactly that applauſe which you merit.

AS a lover of my country I cannot refuſe myſelf this ſatisfaction; beſides this, my Lord, the ſingular favour with which you have diſtinguiſhed me, in taking ſuch particular and partial notice of my ſmall performance, and letting the works and the editor of the great Lord Bolingbroke, ſo truly calculated for private good, and public welfare, paſs unobſerved and unno-

ticed by you, is what a grateful mind can never forget.

THERE remains, my Lord, that I beſeech your Grace to believe, that in this future deſign, I ſhall endeavour to abſtain from all appearance of adulation; that I ſhall give you no reaſon to bluſh from remarks too partially made in your favour; that I ſhall repreſent facts as they are, and yet praiſe you as you deſerve.

INDEED, this dedication by many of your enemies, may ſeem to contradict this deſign of preſerving impartiality, and create a ſuſpicion even in your Grace, that the ſpirit of flattery may enter too much into my future writings; but, my Lord, as thoſe I have conſulted on this head agree in the truth of all that is here intended, why ſhould your enemies and your Grace's modeſty withhold me from the truth?

IF a war then ſhould unhappily be declared, how great will be my pleaſure to be engaged, from time to time, in placing your management in its true light? exhibit to the public attention, your magnanimity and miniſterial capacity, in the moſt conſpicuous point of view; your labours for the national welfare, and neglect of your own; and thus excite this diſcontented people to their duty, and juſtly point out how you ought to be conſidered by them?

BUT, my Lord, before I take my leave of you in this dedication, let me entreat you to forgive the liberty I am going to take; do not conceive that it ariſes from any imagined or viſionary deficiency in your Grace; I implore you to believe me, that nothing but your own and the nation's welfare, could poſſibly have drawn this requeſt from my boſom; will you then have the infinite goodneſs to pardon me in this

this requeſt? tho' it may appear extremely ſingular in its kind, I am confident your Grace will indulge me in it, for the good of that nation which you are ſo watchful over; it is, may it pleaſe you, moſt noble and puiſſant prince, That you would condeſcend, for the eaſe of your adminiſtration and the people's good, to permit that moſt eminent and ſcientific, tho' too much neglected calculator, ſtateſman, and friend to Britain, Jacob Henriques, to fill ſome poſt of high importance near your perſon; his ſkill in paying the nation's debts, and raiſing money without any one's contributing a ſhilling towards it, will certainly be moſt extremely uſeful in times of war, tho' it muſt be avowed your method, by reducing money to no value, is new and admirable.

CONSIDER then, may not caſh fail and paper become ſuſpected, if you proceed in this war as in the laſt; let me then

then entreat your Grace, to take him to your's and the nation's aid; it is not to be imagined, what aſtoniſhing advantages may redound to this kingdom, from an union of two ſuch inimitable and comprehenſive underſtandings; his ſaving and your directing ſpirit, mixed with ſuch probable and extenſive ſcheming, will without doubt complete the happineſs of this iſle, already ſo greatly advanced by your Grace's peculiar management.

I HAVE, my Lord, already, from the little knowledge I have in the works of art, deſigned the frontiſpiece which is to accompany my future productions on your Grace; the following lines, my Lord, are a deſcription of it.

BY this your Grace, who I am credibly informed are to the full as knowing in the works of art, as in thoſe of government, and decide as juſtly of the merits of pic-

tures as of men, will have ſufficient time to ſteal a moment from the nation's care, conſider of the deſign before it be carried into execution, and make alterations, if any ſhall be found neceſſary.

IN the fore-ground your Grace is placed beneath a canopy, on a throne, in juſt attitude, and full expreſſion of that wonderful underſtanding, ſteady behaviour, becoming grace, and true importance, which you ſo eminently poſſeſs, and which have ſo long done honor to this nation, in the opinion of all foreign miniſters.

THE favourite bird of wiſdom, the ſagacious owl, always buſied in the dark, perched like the pigeon of Mahomet on your ſhoulder, whiſpers your moſt prudent counſels, his tail is turned towards the people of England, from which part during his communication with your Grace, a certain ſpecies of matter drops upon your

George

George and Garter, at once an emblem of your being adviſed, beloved, and rewarded by that great goddeſs Minerva.

BEFORE your feet ſits Britannia become twi-child, playing with the cap of folly, which ſhe miſtakes for that of liberty.

BEHIND you in a nitch, ſtands the figure of one of the kings of England made of wax.

ON the left hand, a little retired, parents at your command are binding their children in chains, and the Preſbyterian teachers, armed with thong-whips, driving the neceſſitous clergy in tattered crape, fettered together like hounds in couples, on board ſhips which lye ready to tranſport them to America; religion, beauty, and innocence in tears, implore in vain to ſave them from this treatment.

ON your right hand is a large group of puppets, which are ſo conſtructed, that on your Grace's pulling a ſtring, the puppet you intend riſes up, with open mouth, to ſpeak whatever you ſhall dictate.

THESE with many emblematical devices, form the frontiſpiece of the work in which I intend to do juſtice to your Grace.

IF it ſhall have the happineſs to find favour in your eyes, it will add to that pleaſure which I already poſſeſs, in ſubſcribing myſelf,

May it pleaſe your Grace,

your Grace's moſt obedient,

moſt dutiful, moſt humble,

and moſt devoted ſervant

The TRANSLATOR.

PREFACE.

THE many lives of authors which have been written, ſufficiently evince the natural deſire that people entertain, of knowing the particulars which relate to men of letters; to ſatisfy this curioſity, the Tranſlator has determined to give ſome account of the perſon, who wrote the following epiſtles.

THE author Batiſta Angeloni was a Roman by birth, and bred at Rome in the college of that religious order, which is called the jeſuits; during his ſtudies he applied himſelf cloſely to the underſtanding, amongſt other languages, that of the Engliſh; the authors which he read, created in him a great inclination to ſee the nation which had produced them; he therefore came to this kingdom as a miſſionary, and reſided many years in London, and it is but very lately that thoſe, whether of his perſuaſion, or of a different, who knew and loved him, have been

been robbed by death of that pleaſure which was the conſtant attendant of his company, and which is moſt ſincerely regretted.

His figure was pleaſing, his face expreſſive, particularly his eye, his manners engaging; he remarked the objects of ſenſe, and felt thoſe of ſenſation with ſingular accuracy, and tenderneſs, and was much more juſt in his reaſoning, than correct in his ſtyle; he had great quickneſs in conceiving the truth of things intuitively, and was not always patient enough to explain it to men of ſlower apprehenſion; of a ſatyric turn in converſation againſt polite and unpolite vice; in ſecret the moſt humane, compaſſionate, and tender to all human failings and diſtreſs.

His chief excellence conſiſted in analizing the human mind, diſcovering the moſt active and prevalent faculties in our compoſition, adapting proper objects to each, and diſtinguiſhing the motives to actions in men; by long application and delight in this kind of ſtudy, he poſſeſt an inſight into the nature of man, beyond what is to be found but in very few of the ſpecies.

From

FROM this particular turn, and natural perſpicuity, he beheld human nature as it is, diveſted of that exalted idea which the preſent deiſtical reaſoners affect to compliment it with, and yet not ſo depreciated and baſe, as the wild and extravagant humility of the Preſbyterian and Methodiſt delights to conceive and aſſert it to be.

HE had much compared his own particular mind with thoſe of others, and had long concluded that the ſame principles were in all, but vaſtly different in degree; and that from the inequality of faculties in each, aroſe in great part the variety which is found in human kind; a paſſion which is weak in one, is often ſtrong in another: in like manner the perfection of the ſenſes, the delicacy of internal feelings, the powers of the imagination, the ſtrength of reaſoning, the promptneſs of faith, were all variouſly proportioned, and yet to be found in ſome degree in all; from this he inferred, that as the human mind was compounded of all theſe diſtinct faculties, that objects were originally created for each faculty, and that the true legiſlator ought to adapt thoſe

which were the moſt agreeable to the nature of man, and conducive to the general welfare.

In all inſtitutions civil and religious, it was his ſtanding maxim, that the ſenſes, paſſions, faith, imagination, and reaſon, ought to be influenced by objects, which are proper to incite the mind to virtue, and withhold it from vice.

From a full conviction of this truth, he ſuſtained, that nothing had in it ſo little reaſon, as that pretenſion of the Deiſts to govern mankind by reaſon, excluding the objects of faith, and the influence of religion; and that examining the individual articles of a nation's religious belief, by the inquiſition of reaſon, according to the preſent deiſtical writers, was the moſt infallible mark of a limited and narrow underſtanding, unpractiſed in human nature, and blind to its conduct in mental proceeding; in religious conſiderations, he never diſtinguiſhed between utility and truth; whatever then was uſeful, in his opinion was true; and this, eſtabliſhed by law, made national truth; for this reaſon he entertained the moſt contemptible opinion of Chub above all writers: the mind, ſays he, diveſted of

a re-

a religious faith eſtabliſhed by law, will adopt a more abſurd one in its place, and become more ridiculous by the change; it is my conſtant remark, that none give credit to ſuch abſurdities, as thoſe who pretend to believe nothing.

UTILITY and truth in all national conduct, whether civil or religious, being the ſame thing in his opinion; he concluded that whoever intended to diminiſh the influence of religious ordinances on the mind of man, was either weak or wicked, and conſequently deſtructive of the public good; for this reaſon, a certain biſhop, who has endeavoured to ſet the human mind looſe from every anchor which can hold it ſteady to virtue, into the open, ſtormy ocean of infidelity and private opinion, was no great favourite of his.

HIS rule of right and wrong, truth or falſehood, in the inſtitution and objects for moral and religious obligation, was the fitneſs and propriety which they bore to the faculties exiſting in the human mind; and from this way of conceiving things, he always inſiſted that no ſyſtem of philoſophy or religion, ancient or modern, or union

of both, ſo truly correſponded to the whole compoſition of man in head and heart, as the chriſtian religion: this I imagine will appear in his letters.

FROM this ſagacity in conſidering the human powers, he had alſo ſeen the neceſſity of each faculty being animated and reſtrained, by motives which are native and original to it; for this reaſon he entertained the moſt deſpicable opinion of the miniſtry who preſided in public affairs, who had weakly imagined, that money was a proper incentive to honorable actions in war, and that men could be purchaſed by it, to virtuous and becoming deeds. In their whole adminiſtration, he frequently aſſerted, that not the leaſt ray of the knowledge of mankind, appeared thro' the darkneſs of their conduct; and in conſequence of this, that every nation, ſo directed, muſt neceſſarily tumble into ruin.

THERE ſeem but very few men in nature of underſtanding ſufficiently perfect to make reaſonable and juſt obſervations on the actions of human nature, in the different manners, cuſtoms, and

and laws of nations; of theſe again how few can diveſt themſelves of original and inviſible prejudices, which they have imbibed from education and manners of their own country, and juſtly diſtinguiſh between right and wrong, in thoſe compariſons which they make between the religion, laws, conſtitution, and government of other nations and their own?

THE inſtitutions in religion and government in the land we are born, generally conſtitute the idea of right in theſe things, in the minds of the individuals, and moſt men conſider theſe as fixed rules of truth to try others by, rather than as objects to be examined by what is to be found in other nations; and even thoſe of a more liberal manner of conceiving things, cannot diveſt themſelves of that education which has influenced all their lives, and formed their manner of thinking, ſufficiently to judge impartially, between the fitneſs or unfitneſs of a government, in all parts, to the original fabric of the human mind.

BESIDES this, that partial love of our country, which tho' it ought to enter ſtrongly into

every heart, ſhould be as ſtrenuouſly excluded from the head of every examiner of national inſtitutions, is very apt to diſguiſe the truth, and ſecret it from ourſelves.

LIKE children, the natives are blind to the faults, and magnifiers of the virtues, which are inherent in their mother country; the ſanguine mind exalting every virtue, conceives his nation the ſupreme of all, and invincible; the timid, uniting fear with love, is aghaſt at every apprehenſion of an attack from abroad, and trembles for his country; each of theſe from their native conſtitutions, where paſſions are ſtrongly united with reaſon, are equally biaſſed to different and fallacious opinions, no true obſervation is to be expected from theſe men; and yet ſuch form the generality of all nations. Thus then, a true ſtate of any kingdom is not to be expected from the natives, either in its domeſtic police, or foreign influence; for the ſame reaſon that the Engliſh are prohibited from ſeeing their national cuſtoms in a true light, ſtrangers are equally prevented by their prepoſſeſſion in their own favour; beſides this, they

ſeldom tarry long enough in any country, to wear off the prevalency of firſt impreſſions, to be intimately acquainted with a people's manners, accuſtomed to their habits, and uninfluenced from particular prejudices.

If ever they remain in any kingdom long enough to effectuate all this, they bid faireſt to diſcover the real ſituation of it, to weigh its policy and religion with that of others. and draw the leaſt partial concluſions.

To know one country well, it is neceſſary to have long reſided in ſome other; the medium which forms itſelf in the mind of man habituated to reflexion, cannot ſettle into the center of things, without being weaned from old cuſtoms by the habit of new; the loſs on one ſide, and gain on the other, bring the ballance as near as poſſible to an equipoiſe.

If this be acceded to, the writer of the following letters promiſes ſome appearance of truth in his remarks; his long living in this iſland had weaned him from former prejudice, and even created a love for its inhabitants; it is to be hoped

hoped therefore, that the following remarks are neither trifling, inaccurate, prejudiced, or unjuſt; of this the reader will decide. The friends of the author thought them worth giving to the public, and at their requeſt they are tranſlated, yet not without permiſſion granted by him during his indiſpoſition; from his hands I received them in the Italian, and from mine they go to the public in Engliſh: I had once an inclination to have printed them in the original, but the bookſeller imagined an edition in that language, would not be diſpoſed of.

THERE is this farther to be objected on this head, that the author, being a catholic, may be imagined to incline too much to that manner of thinking in religion and government; it muſt however, at the ſame time be remembered, that we are Proteſtants, and not under leſs influence of prejudice and education, than thoſe who are bred in nations of more arbitrary power, and more ceremonious worſhip; that if being educated under the influence of fear from churchmen and ſtateſmen, may depreſs the mind, being brought up unchecked by either of theſe

reſtraints;

reſtraints, lets looſe the ſoul into all that is wild and extravagant; in ſhort, that whatever can be ſaid againſt men ſo bred, may in another view be oppoſed againſt us who are not; ſo that neither can be a proper judge of what each country truly is, whilſt the individuals continue under the influence of their original education.

If this man originally poſſeſſed the effect of his youthful prejudices, in the purſuit and attention of his later ſtudies he loſt them; not worn into deiſm by diſapproving all religion, nor blown into extravagant enthuſiaſm by contemning reaſon; examination had made him drop from the vaſt pomp and parade of popery, and deſpiſe the pretended ſimplicity of Quakers and Preſbyterians; if he ſaw that the mind of men might be too much buſied in ceremony, and thence neglect the real duties of religious worſhip, he was convinced alſo, that in its nature it was not ſuſceptible of that purity, and ſimplicity, affected by the ſectaries; he obſerved, that a falſe and exorbitant faith was the conſequence of the firſt, and hypocriſy, deteſtable vice, the effect of the other; and that human nature, to be well directed, muſt be influenced by objects juſtly adapted

adapted in nature and degree to every faculty in the ſoul. This was his ſyſtem of natural government; as a man of honor, he did not chooſe to change the manner of profeſſing his religion; as a chriſtian, he conſidered vows made in that awful view, as indelible; as a philoſopher, he beheld things in another light, where no one mode appearing perfect, the difference was not ſufficient to create a renunciation of former tenets; laſtly, his fixed opinion was, that chriſtianity contained in itſelf the moſt perfect of all philoſophies.

THE following letters being all written ſome time ſince, it is to be hoped, that no one will apply perſonally what they contain, from any imaginary reſemblance which may be found between thoſe who were then in the adminiſtration, and theſe who have at preſent this honor; if they ſhould be guilty of this miſtake, it is they and not the author, who are to be blamed in that application.

IF there ſhould appear any ſeeming contradictions in this collection, it may be offered in defence of that appearance, that a man is not

leſs

leſs different from himſelf at ſome times, than two men are different from each other; that every faculty has its hour of reigning, and that objects appear extremely different to the ſame mind, according to the medium thro' which they are ſeen; the gay and gloomy minutes have not a leſs influence on objects, than ſun-ſhine and ſhade, and the man of to-day, looking at things thro' one diſpoſition, approves what another day's review may condemn beheld thro' a different temper: hope gilds the objects of one hour, and fear obſcures the ſame conſidered on the next.

In this manner things might have been beheld by the author of theſe letters; nay, perhaps, this very particular circumſtance may render them more generally pleaſing, as variety of diſpoſitions may find ſomething to like and diſapprove, the latter of which has its pleaſure in many heads, and even contradictory minds by approving and condemning in direct oppoſition to each other.

To be agreeable to all, is, in the nature of things, impoſſible; and the author is removed from

from all poſſible power of ſuffering from invective; tho' his writings may probably diſpleaſe many, we hope they will be agreeable to more, and that the people of this iſland will endeavour to examine candidly and impartially, what are the truths and falſehoods contained in the letters of Battiſta Angeloni, tho' a Roman jeſuit.

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LETTER I.

To the Reverend Father FRANCESCO MOLA, *of the College of* JESUITS *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

NO compliment, however well turned in its expreſſion or elegant in its conception, can impart a more flattering idea to an Engliſhman than that of comparing him with an old Roman; the valour, prudence, love of liberty and his country, with thoſe other eminent qualities of our illuſtrious predeceſſors, are the attributes which he receives with moſt delight.

IF a foreigner, in company with a member of parliament who had that day ſold himſelf and his country to the inclinations of a pernicious miniſter,

niſter, ſhould compare the ſenate of Rome to the houſe of commons of Great Britain, he would ſee a ſenſible joy ſpreading over his face, a civility in his actions and expreſſions, forgetting for one moment that he had revolted from the virtue of his anceſtors and committed the moſt opprobrious action belonging to man.

THERE was perhaps a time when theſe iſlanders might with much juſtice aſſume the likeneſs of thoſe Romans who lived in the moſt flouriſhing and virtuous moments of the Roman ſtate. When integrity was the greateſt honor, poverty no ſhame, and the ſervice of their country their higheſt ambition and deem'd their moſt exalted virtue; but they are greatly deceived if they imagine the preſent race reſembles the former.

BELIEVE me, Sir, the miſtake lies only in the point of time? If you advance more forward in the dates of the Roman empire, the reſemblance is extremely remarkable; that venality which once raged in Rome reigns here with equal diſtinction at preſent, and when I leave London, I ſhall pronounce with as much truth

as

as Jugurtha did at leaving Rome, *urbem venalem et mature perituram ſi emptorem invenerit.*

If one may be allowed to judge of the different periods of the moral character of a nation and compare them with another whoſe race has been ran thro' all the various ſtages of the courſe, the Romans in the time of Sylla were like the Engliſh of this preſent hour, in the corruption of their hearts and their diſpoſition to venal influence, and the ruin of this government is near the ſame date proceeding from the ſame cauſe.

Not that I mean to ſhew or imagine that things will proceed or terminate in this kingdom exactly as they did at Rome, tho' the conſtitution is totally perverting from its original plan.

Things are not enough alike in nature, eſpecially thoſe which are compounded of ſuch numerous parts as thoſe that form a goverment, to permit a parallel between the progreſſive ſtates of any two conſtitutions, one of which is already ruined and the other advancing a great pace; and yet there is analogy enough to predict the

deſtruction of a preſent government by manners prevailing in it ſimilar to thoſe which ruined a former ſtate.

FROM this it is, that the antiminiſterial part of this kingdom keeping in idea the progreſſion of the Roman ſtate too cloſely parallel to the Engliſh, and forming no certain judgment from the principles and manners now actuating and exiſting, conclude, that becauſe a proſtitute venality was the ruin of Rome and a ſtanding army the executive power, that England muſt be ruined by a ſtanding army alſo, and that as Rome fell under the ſubjection of one arbitrary man, the fate of this kingdom will terminate in like manner.

To me it appears, who ſee things, or, at leaſt endeavour to ſee them, in a light which a native (generally too prejudiced) is leſs likely to behold them, that the ſtanding army of England will ſcarcely be the inſtrument of changing the conſtitution of this kingdom, or a monarchical ſtate the firſt alteration it receives.

In order to make an army oppreſs their fellow countrymen, it ſeems neceſſary that it ſhould be much inured to conqueſt, detained long abroad in the kingdoms which they ſubdue, and exerting a deſpotiſm which the victor too often aſſumes over the conquered; by this new habit the temper of the whole ſoldiery becomes changed, thence indeed by an ambitious general it may be led to enſlave the land of its nativity, abſence having weaned them from that tenderneſs which they originally cheriſhed for their native country, and a long exerciſe of power over thoſe they vanquiſhed totally eradicated the love of equality with thoſe amongſt whom they were born.

From this it ſeems to me it aroſe, that the Romans inured to conqueſt and power in the different parts of the world, under the command of Cæſar in Gaul and other generals in different parts, drowned all love for their country in the deſire of power, and deſtroyed one another with as little remorſe as they would a Gaul or an Aſiatic.

How the Britons ſhould come to this exceſs is not eaſy to conceive; they can ſcarce be led to conqueſt any where and long enough detained from home, to forget their native land by the exerciſe of power. Beſides this, humanity towards the vanquiſhed is every where at preſent ten times greater than it was in the days of Rome, and conſequently an arbitrary diſpoſition leſs obtained by reſiding in a conquered country than at that time.

ADDED to this, that unleſs the army be commanded by the king in perſon, or ſome one nearly related to him whoſe intereſt is inſeparable from that of the reigning prince, there can not be much to fear; the general who has led the troops to conqueſt in a ſtrange land will ſcarcely lead them to rebellion in their native ſoil; there generally ſubſiſts too good an underſtanding between the commander and potentate to form the leaſt ſuggeſtion of his ſetting up a ſeparate intereſt; and increaſing his ſovereign's power would probably loſe his own. Tho' the ſoldiers are induced to love the prince under whoſe reign they conquer notwithſtanding

ing he never enters the field of battle, as well as the general by whom they are led to it, connecting each in the cauſe, yet is there little to fear from that union. Queen Anne ſhared the glory of conqueſt and eſteem with the Duke of Marlborough, and every old ſoldier joins them in his praiſes, and yet they would not have made her abſolute. For theſe reaſons it ſeems only neceſſary that the king or ſome one nearly related to him be not the commanding officer, and England has nothing to dread from a ſtanding army, mixed as it is amongſt its own countrymen, and its officers generally from the beſt families.

In truth, Sir, to me there does not appear to be the leaſt dread of the loſs of liberty from the army of England; the intereſt of the exiled family is almoſt extirpated, no Engliſhmen will contend in their favour who can make head long enough to create a mortal antipathy in each party, which might terminate in the ruin of both, and abſolute power: Competitors for kingdoms are comets which bring plague, peſtilence and ſlavery to the natives, let which ſide will prevail; and tho' this nation has been moſt

amazingly reſcued from tyranny by the indolence and inactivity of Richard Cromwell, who with the ſpirit of a man might have been abſolute as his father; and by the timidity, want of munificence and change of religion in James the ſecond; yet the ſame conſequences are by no means to be expected always. A conteſted kingdom renders the conqueror abſolute in general, and the vanquiſhing and vanquiſhed party are alike ſlaves in the ſecond generation. For this reaſon if there was no other, I think that a revolution ſhould never be attempted but to prevent tyranny, for tho' this favourite people has preſerved its liberty by revolutions, yet if a calculation could have been made à priori of the probabilities, whether liberty would have been increaſed or not by thoſe tranſactions, it would have appeared ten to one againſt that which happened in the end? Where then was their wiſdom? and what reaſon have they to expect, this ſuperior favour of heaven above other nations will always attend them? Is it worth while then for two parties to contend when each muſt ſuffer ſooner or later by the conteſt? or are two men tho' both kings worth all the bloodſhed of a civil war, when nothing is to be expected

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by the change which may improve the condition of the inhabitants? Indeed the people of England are not at preſent in that taſte of thinking, and yet perhaps their liberty in more danger of ruin than at any other time. It appears to me that mankind in moſt nations are ſo much civilized, that were not abſolute monarchies already ſo firmly eſtabliſhed, it would be extremely difficult to induce one part of a nation to inſlave the other by arms; tho' there remain innumerable other ways by which it may be done, one of which I ſhall endeavour to ſhew you in my next letter, and which I ſuppoſe will prove the prevailing power and deſtroying angel of this land. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

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LETTER II. To the ſame.

Dear Sir,

IT is not at all ſurprizing that you who judge of the manners of this nation from what has been written of them only, ſhould form your opinion of its character different from that which really exiſts at this hour.

WHAT you ſay with reſpect to the Engliſh in the time of Charles the firſt is true; but the two intereſts which inflamed the minds of this people into ſuch extravagant enthuſiaſm are quite at an end, at leaſt as to martial matters, neither the Lord of hoſts nor the king has one ſoldier who will fight his battles independent of his own private intereſt, tho' perhaps each party exerts as much prating in their favour as at any time whatever.

WHAT I mean is, that neither religion nor the preſervation of a crown in the ſame family, will make the people cut one another's throats, in this iſland, at leaſt in this part of it.

To whatever exceſs the Tories have carried the notion of indefeaſable hereditary right and non-

non-reſiſtance, how much ſoever the idea of a king is to be conſidered as ſacred in their principles, the prevailing opinion of the Whigs running into the oppoſite extreme and conſidering the crowned head as the ſervant of the people, hath as much deſtroyed the true conſtitution by that means, as it would have been by the former had it been carried into execution.

MEN will ſpeculatively ſupport an opinion with vehemence, the ill effect of which they do not feel, which opinion carried into practice, thoſe very identical perſons will oppoſe with all their might; and therefore thoſe very Tories who preached ſo much in favour of their paſſive doctrine, would not have acquieſced in the ſufferings of an arbitrary power, and thus probably the due poiſe of the government might have been adjuſted.

WHEREAS the Whigs ſpinning the web of their ſyſtem too fine for the turbulent nature of mankind and more ſubtle than any government is capable of being well directed by, giving the king his power, the people its liberty, on ſuch nice and exact diſtinctions, ideal only, at leaſt

with reſpect to long duration, have by pretending to preſerve their privileges uſurped a right which by no means belongs to them, and placed the ſovereign in a ſituation infinitely below his true degree.

NOTHING appears more exquiſitely combined to an unexperienced examination than the Engliſh goverment, where the executive and legiſlative powers, controul each other ſo perfectly, where the prerogative of the crown and rights of the people are ſo nicely adjuſted and counterpoiſed; it is indeed a fine machine in idea, yet the fabric is too delicately wrought to go long well, and ſubtilty of workmanſhip wants ſtrength of parts to ſuſtain it.

IN real truth the oligarchic government has been gaining ground ever ſince the revolution; the reaſon of it ſeems to be this.

AT the time of king William's being fixt on the throne of Great Britain thoſe who placed him there were the Whigs, who, tho' they might pretend an attachment to his intereſt, had really no other inclination than an increaſe of their own

own power, diſguiſed under the pretence of preſerving liberty, and which at that very time was really true in its effects, tho' not in their deſign.

But as it was the ſtanding and avowed principle of thoſe men in power to aſſert that every man had a right to think and decide for himſelf in religious matters, to deride the clergy and inveigh againſt their tyrannic diſpoſition, it naturally became impoſſible to reſtrain thoſe perſons from thinking for themſelves in all affairs civil as well as religious; thoſe who have indulged themſelves in every kind of latitude in examining the objects of religion and inſiſt on their right to it, will never ſtop from that of government; if they have a right to act with freedom in one they will alike purſue it in the other, the minds of men are not capable of ſuch nice ſeparations, if they are indulged in one they will uſurp it in the other, and the conſequence will be that if they conceive they have a right to decide for themſelves in matters of religion and act in conſequence of it, ſo in thoſe of government they will apprehend they have an equal right, and will endeavour to act in conſequence of that alſo.

THUS the love of power being ſo natural to man, it has followed that the miniſtry of England have gained in arbitrarineſs ſince that time, and the kings and the people loſt their rights.

THE Whig miniſter then from the nature of man and his own principles, which are built on ſelf intereſt, muſt be ever increaſing his own power and infringing thoſe of his maſter and the liberty of his ſubjects: as it is the love of power which generally leads men to the adminiſtration of a nation, ſo that ſame deſire of ſuperior influence exerts every art to increaſe it and continue them in that ſituation; and in fact the Whigs have put in practice every artifice that can diminiſh the royal prerogative, the people's privileges and liberties, and are at laſt become a kind of traitors to both, and not much different from uſurpers.

THEY have all along conſidered their maſters as neceſſary to offer to the popular eye, to ſcreen themſelves, and to remove the ignominy which would have too apparently fallen upon them in many inſtances; and the people as a bugbear

bugbear to be offered to their princes fears, mixed with the word Jacobite, whenever they intended to quell any riſing obſtinacy in their breaſts.

ADDED to this, they have duped the nation to their intereſt by an enormous debt and public companies of banks, South Seas, and Eaſt Indies, by which proceedings the monied part neceſſarily becomes ſo deeply intereſted in the preſervation of this kind of adminiſtration, that a miniſter is here an abſolute power.

NOT content with this degree of certainty in preſerving deſpotiſm, it has been the univerſal practice to ſpread venality through every little borough in the kingdom; by this may not every man be returned member of ——— who is furniſhed with moſt money from the treaſury? and may not the ſenators of Britain in future times be no longer repreſentatives of a free people, but the repreſentatives of the miniſters inclinations? from this ſource may not ſome future more corrupted man become ſo firmly fixt in the adminiſtration, that, far from fearing the being diſmiſſed from his office, he may even threaten the *king* to leave his ſervice (if one can

uſe

uſe that laſt word on ſuch an occaſion) unleſs his demands are complied with?

WOULD not ſucceſs in ſuch a deſign be an abſolute power? when the miniſter has nothing to apprehend from the prince's diſpleaſure, and thoſe who ſhould be the truſtees of the people's rights and immunities are all choſen by him, and each aſſigned to the borough he ſhall pretend to repreſent, and obedient to his will.

THESE laſt then are the ſtanding troops which will deſtroy the conſtitution of Great Britain, and are more to be dreaded than the army, as every thing ſtill bears the ſpecious appearance of the ancient government. Here is the —— and the ——— and who ſhall dare to ſuggeſt that every thing is not tranſacted by them void of all undue influence?

EVERY new way of deſtroying a government is much eaſier executed than one that has been already put in practice, the minds of men are alarmed by the ſimilarity of the ſecond to the firſt, and therefore are eaſily led to obſerve it; from this it happens that whilſt the Whigs have been crying

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ing out againſt popery, paſſive obedience, and arbitrary power, the eyes of the people have been drawn to thoſe objects, and never attended the ſilent path by which theſe exclaimers ſtole to power; in this imitating little thieves in a throng, one calls your attention to the right whilſt another picks your pocket on the left. They thought they had once ſuffered from the two former cauſes, and therefore believed it probable they might again; but being never accuſtomed to, or indeed capable of inveſtigating the true cauſe of any thing, or perceiving where the principles of the Whigs would terminate, lulled with the muſic of that ſong of liberty which was for ever chanted in their ears, that the king's power was diminiſhed by the revolution, they conceived it impoſſible they could be enſlaved from another quarter; and becauſe they ſaw their prince's authority decline, they concluded it impoſſible that it could increaſe in any other place. This will finiſh the life of liberty in England, not unobſerved by numbers, tho' too few to prevent its fall, not unoppoſed by thoſe who to the honor of themſelves and fellow ſubjects would have reſcued their country from ruin, if true

reaſoning, or public utility, had any longer found attention in the nation.

PERHAPS, in uſing the term ſlavery, I have aggravated the condition of the Engliſh beyond that ſtate in which it really at preſent ought to be conſidered, tho' I fear abſolutely beyond recovery; every individual being diſunited from the other, without any common principle to hold them together; open to venality, vending the public good for private intereſt, and regarding honor, patriotiſm and its attributes, as viſionary ties of deluded and miſtaken men.

PERHAPS, if the united kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland were not ſo extenſive, ſomething like the Venetian government might one day be the fate of theſe kingdoms; but as they ſeem too large for the nature of that conſtitution, as the people have ſo long taſted of kingly government mixt with liberty, the ſway which ariſtocracy or oligarchy would bear over the people would be too ungrateful, and drive them to the ſurrendering themſelves entirely to the diſpoſal of the prince upon the throne; and thus deſpotiſm in one, take its riſe from the deſire of avoiding

avoiding the deſpotiſm of many, as it once happened in Denmark.

I preſume you are tired with this long letter; I therefore give you my benediction, and diſmiſs you with the trueſt aſſurance, that I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LETTER III. To the ſame.

Dear Sir,

YOUR compliment, in anſwer to my laſt, merits my beſt acknowledgments: you deſire me to give you my ſentiments, on what would have been the fate of England, if the Tories had continued in the adminiſtration; but this is an affair compoſed of ſuch different and entangled parts, that it will be almoſt impoſſible to develope what would have been the conſequence; it will be more difficultly decided, than the famous queſtion in Livy, where that author examines, what would have been the ſucceſs of Alexander's arms, if he had turned them againſt the Italians, inſtead of the Perſians.

IF we conſider a Tory ſimply, without connecting with it what all the Whigs never fail of beſtowing him, in my opinion, he is the propereſt miniſter; a man of his principles muſt conceive the religion of his country, the prerogative of the crown, the rights of the people, ſomething above himſelf; as he acknowledges he has no right to think different from the eſta-

bliſhment in either caſe. Whereas, every Whig muſt imagine himſelf above all theſe; becauſe he imagines he has a right to think, and determine for himſelf in each particular. And certainly it is the nature of that man, who thinks he has a privilege of accepting or refuſing whatever parts he pleaſes in any government, to be leſs bound by it, than thoſe who look on the three above mentioned articles as ſacred. The conſtitution is for ever unſtable from principle, in the hands of a Whig, and fixt in that of a Tory: For tho' this kingdom received its ultimate degree of perfection, at the acceſſion of king William to the throne; yet that principle of changing, which has inſenſibly prevailed ſince, has totally deſtroyed the true ſtate of the government then eſtabliſhed, in every thing but nominals; after that change, it was abſolutely neceſſary to be ſteady.

SUPPOSING that the catholic religion, and the return of the Stuarts, would have been the neceſſary attendants of a Tory miniſtry; things which are always connected in the idea of a Tory by a Whig; it muſt be difficult to aſcertain, what would have followed ſuch a change, or how

far the miſtaken zeal of thoſe catholics, whoſe fiery imaginations puſhed king James the ſecond into ſuch precipitate diſcoveries of his religious faith, would have carried them?

YET, give me leave to aſſert, that, if the Whig principle was neceſſary to preſerve the Engliſh in their freedom and religion, at the revolution; the Tory is equally neceſſary at this moment, unleſs they prefer no king and no religion, and madly imagine a nation can be well directed, without either of them, and their conſtitution preſerved.

WHATEVER was the opinion and deſign of the Tories at the revolution, however fixt their attachment to the Stuart race might be, at that time, thoſe notions at preſent are at an end; they now defend the royal houſe on the throne, with as much zeal as the Whigs, and can only preſerve the kingdom from the anarchic ſtate which threatens it, before it totally takes its laſt unalterable change. In fact, unleſs the Tories have the adminiſtration, or their principles are adopted, the Engliſh conſtitution is at an end: it is become as abſolutely requiſite to oppoſe the oligarchic power at preſent, as ever it was the monarchic,

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in the time of king James the ſecond; and the principles of the Tories will ſoon be as neceſſary to defend his preſent majeſty, and the people's rights, from the uſurpation of the miniſtry, as thoſe of the Whigs were in the reign of king James the ſecond, to protect the people's liberties alone.

NOTHING is ſo apt to deceive mankind, as ſpecious plans of government, ideally delineated on paper: what can be finer imagined than this of England? but it is in this inſtance, as in the moſt highly finiſhed machines; a duſt ſtops their motion, or produces an irregularity. If men were all reaſonable beings, and their whole drift and deſign were to render each other happy; if no intervening paſſions would interfere, to diſturb the regular diſpoſition of things, and the principles of a government once eſtabliſhed would proceed as uniformly as thoſe in mechanics; the Whig plan of the Engliſh conſtitution would be the beſt adapted for human nature, and human happineſs.

BUT alas! ſuch is the temper of man, that ſomething more material and hardy muſt make

up the component parts of a government, than thoſe which are imagined in the whig ſyſtem.

IF a king ſuppoſes that he has an indefeaſable right, and his miniſter indulges him in that imagination; a militia, which was the ancient military force of this kingdom, and the gentry which command it, will never bend to ſuch a diſpoſition, carried beyond what the laws allow.

NO king has an indefeaſable right to more than what the conſtitution allows him; and this is, and may be ſafely granted: whatever more the ſpeculative zeal of a people may yield him, their ſenſations will contradict and correct; and real feelings baniſh the influence of ideal notions. Thus, in this very manner of conſidering things, the king's deſire of power muſt be oppoſed by the people's love of liberty; two objects of the ſame ſtrong paſſion, which, meeting like the ſides of an arch in the central ſtone, ſupport all firm and connected.

IF a ſtranger may judge of a nation he has long lived in, the preſent natives are miſtaken in

in what is every day advanced in public places, that the Tories are become Whigs, and the Whigs Tories; which is, that the miniſter has adopted the principles of the Tory, tho' he calls himſelf a Whig, and the Tory oppoſes on thoſe of the Whigs.

BUT I think nothing has leſs truth in it than this aſſertion; the Tories have no inclination to oppoſe the king, they bend their force againſt the miniſter alone, whoſe power they ſee every year ſo enormouſly increaſing; and the miniſter has no inclination to augment the regal prerogative, and only advances his own power: thus it appears that the Whigs are ſtill Whigs, tho' in power; and the Tories ſtill the ſame, tho' out of it.

THIS is the true ſtate as it appears to me, and the Whigs are conſcious of it; for which reaſon they brand with the opprobrious term of Jacobitiſm, all thoſe who are in the oppoſition to their meaſures. And as the million judges from words alone, without diſtinguiſhing ideas, this keeps their ſchemes from being examined, and their opponents doomed to a kind of infamy.

METHINKS I have given you an account ſufficient to let you into the preſent ſituation of Engliſh liberty; I have no more to add on this ſubject, and only deſire that you would conceal theſe Letters, which I may from time to time write you; perhaps there may be greater freedom in them, than the nature of our order allows, or at leaſt, than ſome warm heads will permit, who cannot bear a difference of ſentiment in matters of this nature. Adieu, I am

Yours moſt ſincerely.

LETTER IV.

To the Rev^d. Father PAOLO SIGNERI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IT has been my frequent obſervation, that when man cannot account for any phænomenon which is characteriſtic of the manners of a nation, they immediately ſeek aſſiſtance from external nature, to explain the appearance and effects of internal. Indeed, a late writer of great merit would ſolve all the difference of governments on the face of the earth, by referring them to the variety of air, climates and ſoils, which are to be found upon it; and thus, by placing words in the ſtead of ideas, ſoothe us into a ſolution of that phænomenon, which he yet leaves unaccounted for.

IT is ten thouſand times eaſier to ſay, that the air, climate, and ſoil of Venice, have been the cauſes of the government which exiſts in that city, than to trace the thouſand intricacies, which lead back to its real ſource.

To

To me it appears, that nothing which affects the body in the manner which thoſe external objects muſt affect it, can be the motives to any conſiderable changes in government; they may make men more or leſs healthy, fatter or leaner, hotter or colder. But as all parts of government take their riſe from the powers of the mind and caſual circumſtances in its progreſſion; methinks, to that all changes and conſtitutions of it ſhould be refer'd.

Would it not puzzle a philoſopher who eſpouſes this airial ſyſtem of government, to aſſign by what wind the little republics of Lucca and St. Marino were blown into Italy, ſurrounded with dominions of another kind; and preſerved during the change of the reſt? Or whence it ariſes, that the very city which you inhabit ſhould have felt ſuch remarkable alterations? Are the climes and all material objects ſo totally changed ſince the days of Cincinnatus, that the revolutions of Rome can be deduced from thoſe cauſes? Have the winds of liberty forgotten to blow over that city, and the ſoil refuſed to lend nurture to its ſeeds?

That

THAT the effects of climates and exterior cauſes operate little in producing the various forms, by which mankind is governed, methinks we need to ſeek no other proof, than that ſameneſs of government which prevails thro' the continent of America, where (according to the accounts from the beſt travellers I have converſed with in this kingdom, who have often viſited the various nations which inhabit that part of the earth, and reſided long with them) they are all held by one kind of conſtitution, from the leaſt habitable parts of the north, to thoſe of the gulf of Florida; and even the more ſouthern diviſion of Mexico and Peru, tho' the Spaniſh writers have given ſuch formidable accounts of their emperors and incas, have no remaining traces which can lead a traveller to believe their ſtories; this renders their accounts to be ſuſpected, and that the vanity of being deem'd conquerors of great nations, may have ſupplied their imaginations with what was deficient in reality.

IF winds, ſoil, and climates, were the efficient cauſes of that great variety of forms in government, which ſubſiſt on the face of the old world; it would be reaſonable to expect the ſame conſequences

ſequences in the new, where theſe cauſes have equally operated, and America ſhould therefore teem with all that is to be found in Europe in that kind.

YET, Sir, if we diſclaim all reſource from theſe cauſes, do not we deliver up the veſſel of philoſophy to the direction of winds and waves; and loſing that which may paſs for a reaſonable account, tho' without foundation, ſet our minds into diſquietude, and thus become more unhappy by this diſcovery, which tends to tell us we have been deluded.

SHALL we then ſay, that ſuicide amongſt the ancient Romans and preſent Britons, is owing to the winds, air and ſoil? If we ſhould pay this complaiſance to that opinion, how will it help us to explain, why Rome has loſt that iniquity, and England found it? Why it deſerted that land, where it is no more known, and fled to this, where it never found admittance in former times? or ſhall we riſque the aſſigning ſome cauſe, which may explain this phænomenon. Notwithſtanding this cuſtom of ſelf-murder has ſo greatly prevail'd in each nation, I am far from thinking, that it took its riſe from the ſame cauſes in Rome,

and in England; the education of Roman youth was military, and a contempt of life was of conſequence inculcated into their firſt ideas, and grew up into a total poſſeſſion of their ſouls.

BESIDES this, the nature of their religion does not ſeem to offer ſuch reaſons for the fear of death, as the Chriſtian; nor is it yet quite evident to me, that the Romans believed in a future ſtate: if Tully in ſome places ſeems to give countenance to ſuch a belief, in others he contradicts it; and Tacitus, and he, I think, aſcribe the intrepid behaviour of the Germans, to their expectation of rewards in another world, for dying glorioufly in this.

DOES not this ſeem to intimate, that the Romans entertain'd no notions of future exiſtence; at leaſt, that it was not the popular opinion, or even the philoſophical? and if they expected no reward it is ſcarce probable they feared puniſhment.

THUS it ſeems that their diſpoſition of killing themſelves aroſe from a contempt of life, early ingrafted in their minds, not conceiving it worthy the dignity of a Roman to live in miſery,

ſery or diſhonour, either ideal or abſolute, for the ſake of preſerving that ſimple property, exiſtence.

FROM this reſolution their religion could not terrify them; it did not tell them, that the ſufferings of this world lead to the felicities of a better; or that the crime of ſelf-murder would be attended with puniſhment hereafter: they had nothing to hope by tarrying here in affliction, and nothing to dread by leaving it, thro' their own voluntary inclinations; and thus the love of life alone was not ſufficiently prevalent to withhold their hands from ſuicide, unaſſiſted by the two prevailing paſſions of hope and fear.

IF you ſhould have the goodneſs to indulge me in this account of the cauſe of the Roman ſuicide, it will ſerve me but little, I fear, in this of the Engliſh. Theſe men are Chriſtians, I think I may ſay it to you, who ſee things with the leaſt prejudice of all men, tho' our faith ſcarce allows it to them; and yet I believe we muſt have recourse to the reformation and its conſequences, for the cauſe of this unnatural practice. In endeavouring to trace this to its ſource, we may perperhaps find the reaſon, why it no longer prevails in Italy; and diſcover the cauſe of its prevailing

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in this kingdom, to be owing to the neglect of that which is obſerved in catholic countries.

EVER ſince my reſiding in this nation, when I have heard of this raſh act of ſelf-murder being committed, and have endeavour'd at the knowledge of the character of thoſe perſons who have been guilty of it; it has conſtantly appeared to be from poverty, from which they ſaw no way of relieving themſelves; from a religious melancholy, where the fear of future puniſhments has weighed down thir ſouls ſo heavily, that they have fled from this inſupportable burthen, to the very place they dreaded, the preſent pang was too dreadful to ſuffer a moment's delay; from diſappointment in their deſires; from having amaſſed large ſums by the moſt iniquitous means, inattentive in the ſultry day of youth and action, to the horrors which muſt ſucceed in the chilly evening of old age; or laſtly from having been equally abandoned thro' the love of inordinate pleaſures in their youth, and ſtored their breaſts with ſeeds of tortures for the inquiſitive hour of conſcience; one or other of theſe has been the viſible cauſe of their ſuicide.

No man is ſo partial to his own religion, to imagine that the catholics have not ſeeds of the ſame diſpoſitions in them; whoever is accuſtomed to confeſs thoſe people, will find them there; but then they poſſeſs a cure which the proteſtants have not, and can fly to the ſalutary and ſoothing expedient of a confeſſor, where the mind diſburthens itſelf in ſecrecy and ſafety, and comes back lighten'd from its woes, like a galley-ſlave from his fetters juſt knocked off. Every perſon who has felt affliction, or obſerved the conſequences of it in others, muſt have perceived how greedily that condition of the heart pours out the ſtory of its ſufferings and calamities. So earneſt is it of ſeeking ſome ear to whom it may unfold its ſtate, that the deſire of obtaining preſent eaſe very frequently urges men to diſcoveries of what they ought to conceal, and to perſons who they are convinced are no friends, and whom they ought not to truſt.

In many inſtances they dare not put this into execution; a confeſſion of former iniquities would be certain death, irreparable diſgrace, or total ruin: thus the mind continues harraſſed, till it flies to that, which is the greateſt of all terrors, to avoid the preſent.

THOSE in that ſituation have no relief in the religion of England. To whom ſhall they confeſs? Who can be ſafely truſted with the important ſecrets of life, reputation and property, that will not reveal them? Whereas in the catholic religion the confeſſor hears this, and no dread of diſcovery haunts the mind, which has opened its whole cabinet of ſecrets; he ſooths the afflicted into ſome contentment of their ſtate, and alleviates their miſery. It is to the want of this reſource in England, that this horrid crime of ſuicide is chiefly to be attributed, and to the power of confeſſing the moſt atrocious actions, that it prevails no where in catholic countries.

PRAY tell me, Sir, you who have been long inured to the ſecret receſſes of human hearts, and found conſolation for thouſands in diſtreſs, whether this which I have been ſaying, may not offer ſome reaſon for the common practice of ſelf-deſtruction ſo frequent in England, and its deſerting our country? During my reſidence here, I have never known one catholic who has been guilty of it.

To me it appears that the reformers of the Engliſh church were extremely miſtaken in abo-

liſhing auricular confeſſion. To diveſt the prieſt of the power of the peoples conſciences they gave them into their own hands, who are very bad keepers of them; and thro' fear of being held in ſlavery, as they call it, by the church, they reſigned themſelves up to be actuated by that evil principle which reigns more or leſs in every breaſt; which Xenophon has finely deſcribed in his Cyropædia, in the ſtory of Panthæa, to have actuated Araſpes, and which the Chriſtian religion calls the devil.

Is it not true that the minds of men require as much attention, to be preſerved healthy, as their bodies? And tho' we pay the greateſt regard to the latter, in chuſing all we eat or drink, yet diſeaſes will arrive, and we are obliged to fly to ſome ſkill, ſuperior to our own, or we run the riſque of being deſtroyed.

Is it uncharitable to ſuppoſe, that health of body is more the concern of human nature, than ſanity of ſoul? Or that it is leſs ſolicitous to preſerve the latter from ſtains, than the former from every thing which may defile it.

If it is not, it muſt require more relief, and more frequent application to the latter, than attention to the former; the mind of a man will no be more at eaſe under the thoughts of great crimes, than a beauty under that of a letter creeping upon the roſe in her cheeks, and ſpreading deformity; and yet in theſe mental diſeaſes, there are no remedies provided in this land. Is not this to be ignorant of human nature, and a want of the greateſt proof of political ſkill; that of keeping people eaſy in themſelves?

Perhaps it is in part from this cauſe, that there is almoſt an univerſal reſtleſsneſs in the behaviour of the people of England; they are ſteady in nothing but the love of wine, which diſſipates their diſquietude whilſt they ſit together; we ſee them moving from ſeat to ſeat in company, with every ſymptom of the *tædium vitæ* on their countenances and actions. In aſſemblies, without being preſent; riding and driving from one public place to another in ſearch of new objects, which after a week become as dull and unentertaining as thoſe of their own homes. For this reaſon you ſee more people on the roads of Eng-

land than in all Europe, and more uneaſy countenances than are to be found in the world beſides.

ONE great excellence in the government of mankind, is to prevent as much as poſſible the inhabitants of a country from running into exceſſive diſorders, which are fatal to the happineſs of the people; and the moſt effectual way of obtaining this advantage is the coming to the knowledge of them the ſooneſt poſſible.

THE mind which has been tainted by its firſt crime, generally feels inexpreſſible compunction for that commiſſion, and would gladly lay hold on the occaſion of being reinſtated in its former tranquillity. Yet, ſuch is the nature of human frailty, it ſeldom has force enough to obtain this without aſſiſtance; the pain harraſſes him that has lapſed, to drown it in company and exceſs; and that again puſhes him to farther outrage; till at laſt time hardens that heart which before was ſenſible of its offence, and the delinquent goes on to deſtruction, or old age, when all recoils in horror on the ſedentary and inactive ſoul.

THIS is frequently prevented by confeſſing the firſt error, the offender finds ſuch lightneſs

of ſpirits after this diſcharge, ſuch eaſe ſpreading over the ſoul, recalling peace and pleaſure, like a flower drowned with exceſſive rains, or like the ſleeping animal awakened by the genial ſun-beams; that he dreads the relapſing into his former ſtate, and is reclaimed entirely. The ſoul in the guilt of offence is careleſs of itſelf, it heedleſsly lets all run to ruin, but when it becomes depurated by this act of confeſſion and comfort; it takes heed to its paths, and enjoys the felicities which are allotted to human nature.

THE human mind is like a pool, into which ſome filth will flow with the pureſt water, and requires cleaning at certain times, or the whole element becomes corrupted.

YOU muſt have obſerved, Sir, that a ſon who falls under the father's diſpleaſure, if it continues, ſeldom amends his life from it, the pain of having offended, leaves him entirely reſtleſs and unheeding; he commits yet greater offence from that very uneaſineſs which was cauſed by his offending. Yet let a reconciliation be once obtained, he feels a pleaſure and eaſe unknown before, and having freed himſelf from that anxious ſituation, ſins no more, and lives in peace and felicity.

To this want of easing the mind by confession, is to be attributed the frequent commission of suicide, tho' indeed many of these desperate actions may be assigned to the being awed by no god, and influenced by no religion; a state not uncommonly found amongst the highest and lowest ranks of people in this kingdom.

If you converse with the natives of this country on this subject, they will either tell you, that their church allows and approves of confession, or that this use gives the priest an absolute power over the lives and consciences of the confessing.

Indeed, the first is true; but then there lies no punishment against that priest who should reveal the secrets committed to his ear; and thus the penitent has no security: And the latter they are mistaken in, since no man need be afraid of them who cannot hurt him. All revelation of secrets, by catholic clergy, is inevitably punished by death. Pray tell me then, have not these reformers divested human nature of its greatest consolation, and by the imagination of preserving themselves free from the tyranny of the clergy, rendered themselves slaves to those feelings and conditions which are more or less inseparable

from the ſtate of a man, from which very fatal conſequences are hourly ariſing? To me it ſeems, they might have preſerved this cuſtom, without being thought guilty of popery, that heinous ſin to preſbyterian purity. Burn this, and believe me, moſt aſſuredly,

Your moſt obedient.

LETTER V.

To the Reverend Father ANGELO BONCARO, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IT has been frequently remarked, that the happineſs of individuals does not depend on poſſeſſions, and that the labourer enjoys the delights of eaſe and ſleep, with a pleaſure unknown to thoſe who live in continual inactivity: One day of relaxation from toil is taſted with rapture, by thoſe limbs which are exerciſed in work all the other ſix; ſleep is exſtacy to fatigue, and plain food delicious to the hungry. Whilſt all theſe are paſt over, unaffecting the hearts or ſenſes of thoſe who live in one continual reſearch of that which fails them in the poſſeſſion.

IN like manner every people forms the idea of felicity from what it perceives in itſelf: The Engliſh are not more confident, that this iſland from Tweed to the Lands-end, (Scotland is excepted) is the moſt inviting ſpot of the univerſe, than the Laplander, who freezes beneath the arc-

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tic circle, or the negro who burns upon the torrid ſands of Guinea, are of the places of their nativity.

IF this be a weakneſs, it is a beneficial one; it reconciles its inhabitants to the place of their reſidence, and peoples the globe in a thouſand places, which muſt have been otherwiſe a deſert.

YET probably it is no weakneſs in the nature of man, but the abſolute and real condition of being human creatures: the ideas we receive from external objects, and internal ſenſations, form and compoſe the actuality of the ſoul, and theſe naturally make the pleaſures of our lives. Cuſtom and education are the baſis of our judgments; things are conſidered right or wrong, true or falſe, more as they refer to theſe two parts in us, than as they are in the real nature of things. Abſtracted truths are the conceptions of very few underſtandings, whilſt thoſe of relative ones, are general to all minds: the beauty, happineſs, underſtanding, of all nations are examined, as they relate to each individual, tho' imperceptably, and determined to be more or leſs excellent, as they tally with

the ideas which we have formed upon theſe ſubjects; ſelf ſteals into all our examinations, and eſtabliſhes our judgments relating to mankind.

If this be true, that cuſtom and locality form our ſouls and its pleaſures, it of conſequence makes us diſlike or condemn thoſe which differ from us; and therefore, whilſt an Engliſhman wonders how an Italian can live in a land of popery and ſlavery; the Italian admires at the Engliſh libertiniſm, and want of all religion and police; in thoſe two views it appears, to thoſe Engliſh eyes who are accuſtomed to ſee our worſhip in ſuch exceſs, carried into idolatry and arbitrary power, according to Engliſh judgments; and to Italians their liberty is licentiouſneſs.

Methinks liberty is but another name for eaſe; where the mind is in tranquillity under the government where it lives, the inhabitants may be denominated free, at leaſt they cannot be termed ſlaves, where the chains are not felt.

LETTER V.

EVERY Engliſhman's notions of happineſs is included in riches; for that reaſon, wherever they travel, they conclude all the world are more or leſs happy, as they are more or leſs wealthy. When they ſpeak of the deſerted towns of Italy, they talk of their inhabitants as the moſt miſerable of people, becauſe they are not rich; trade, commerce, and buſtle, are their only and eternal notions of felicity: the quiet, ſedentary and contented man, is conceived as unhappy, becauſe he is not in conſtant activity; whereas I believe, that the pain in getting riches, is ſeldom balanced by the joys they bring with them.

IN truth, money is all that is zealouſly purſued in this nation; the inhabitants have placed the whole of human bliſs, in the poſſeſſing it; not conceiving that the mind of man may draw conſolation and exſtatic joy from other objects, with more eaſe and certainty.

WHEN theſe people, on their travels, ſee a poor Italian pouring out the warm devotion of his ſoul, before the image of his patron ſaint,

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they conclude him a fool, or a deluded bigot, becauſe he can draw no advantage from this image, which is inanimate and void of power; and laugh at this as idolatry, not once conceiving that the rapture which fills the ſoul of this devotee, is as real and effectual joy to him and his conception at that time, as if the image was impowered with all the acts of creation: yet theſe very men ſhall approve of the perſon, who, in commerce, ſweats thro' the day, and paſſes the night ſleepleſly, or him who demeans himſelf to act the loweſt character to an idol miniſter, in hopes of that gold, which each is frequently diſappointed of; or, if they lay their hands upon it to take poſſeſſion, feel every parting ſhilling going from their fingers, like vitality from their hearts.

THE idolatrous adorer of gold is frequently deceived, if not always, in one ſhape or another; the religious devotee never: if he does not receive the boon he aſks, he always riſes from his knees with more happineſs, than he fell upon them; and, ſuch is the fabric of the mind of man, finds eaſe in aſking, tho' diſappointed, and continues that devotion thro' a whole

whole life of penury, happy in his religious diſpoſition.

THE miſer can never find eaſe in diſappointment, and tho' he poſſeſſes what he adores, to a man of his temper gold can afford no more of what the world generally admires, than the ſtatue of the ſaint does to the religious; the miſer dares not touch the ſacred hoard, and the marble cannot give. Thus, in each inſtance, it is the belief only, that each object of their devotion has the power of beſtowing, which communicates their happineſs, and no real reception in any other manner from either of them.

IF we place liberty in the room of happineſs; and examine whether the being ſlaves to the paſſion of wealth, and goaded on to the obtaining it, is not as painful as that of being ſubjected to the religion and laws of monarchic ſtates; taking into the conſideration the effects of cuſtom, education, and belief, ſhall we not find that thoſe people are as free as the Engliſh, at leaſt as eaſy, chearful, and contented? which tho' not the ideal liberty of a Britain, is the true one of human nature; in which, freedom

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and eaſe are the ſame things, and the power or the paſſion which domineers over us, is equally a tyrant, whether ſeated without on a throne, or inwardly in our hearts.

For my ſelf, I truly ſay it, were it in my power to chooſe which of thoſe paſſions I would poſſeſs, the love of God in penury, or the love of riches in poſſeſſion as a miſer, even for the joys of this world, were they to extend no farther; I would ſeize the firſt, and renounce the latter: every diſappointment on earth, the devout mind converts by hope into rewards in heaven; and every diſappointment to the adorer of gold, is real torture.

I am therefore ſatisfied, that devotion yields more joy to the natives of Italy, than wealth does to thoſe of England; and that the poor of each nation have no kind of compariſon in their happineſs; thoſe of London having loſt all influence of religion, and almoſt forgotten that there is a God, at leaſt in practice; whilſt thoſe of Rome draw conſtant happineſs, from his eternal preſence.

To the philoſopher it remains to decide, which is the moſt reaſonable way of paſſing life? not to the Engliſh wiſeman, who trying every ſingle object of the various faculties of man, by what he calls reaſon, which is wealth, in this inſtance, judges truly of none: but to that man who knows human nature, its variety and weakneſs, its paſſions, ſenſes, and ſenſations, the fallibility of its judgment and partiality to particular cuſtoms, and what it muſt enjoy to be at eaſe; to him I fanſy, the difference of happineſs will not be ſo wide, as the Engliſh conceive it, between the poſſeſſor of the Romiſh religion, and Engliſh riches; if it ſhould, I own myſelf miſtaken, and recall my opinion; and yet believe me, ſuch is the depravity of man, I am perſwaded, that the catholic Italian would renounce his faith, and patron ſaint, ſooner than the Engliſhman his money, with a view of finding happineſs in the change. I am,

Your moſt obedient.

LETTER VI.

To the Reverend Father STEFANO LORENZINI *at* Rome,

Dear Sir,

PERHAPS it would be difficult to find two cities, which reſemble each other ſo little, as that which you inhabit, and this from whence I write. At Rome tho' there are marks of preſent grandeur, yet the remains of the antient edifices impart an air of dejection, and decline, which naturally awakes the ſigh; whilſt all London increaſes in architecture and inhabitants, and conveys no other idea, but that of buſtle and buſineſs.

WERE we to judge of what paſſes in the ſtreets on all days but the Sunday, we muſt conclude that the idea of a God is unknown in this country; here are no monks in proceſſions, richly clad, bearing crucifixes, and relicks; no hoſt carrying to the ſick, to ſweeten the moment of the ſoul's departure; the temples are ſhut, and their God ſeems exiled from that place,

where

where he is more immediately ſuppoſed to dwell: not a prieſt in the ſtreets to be ſeen, but juſt at the times of, before, or after dinner, ſtrutting behind a roſey cheek and double chin, to or from ſome table of good chear. Even on their days of worſhip in their churches, there is ten thouſand times more inattention to their duty, than to the price of ſtocks in change alley all the reſt of the week; and the fervour of their devotion to obtain a ſeat in paradiſe is infinitely ſhort of that of procuring one in parliament, purchaſing a good bargain on the exchange, or trying to obtain a good place at court: they are as cool and unanimated in their acts of devotion, as they are warm and active in thoſe of getting riches; and their temples, and exchanges, are accordingly conſtructed within for thoſe different diſpoſitions; every family having in their churches a ſnug pew, a kind of cloſet, where they all ſit and ſleep, or employ themſelves in any thing but their duty to the higheſt: whereas, in their places of commercial rendezvous there are no ſeats, they would be uſeleſs there, the zeal of gain keeping them ſtanding to their duty.

On the contrary, the ſtreets of Rome are filled with religious objects, prieſts, proceſſions, crucifixes, the living and dying attending and attended; the churches, ready to receive the riſing devotion of the inhabitants, ſtand with open doors to yield them a place of worſhip; all has the continual air of religious exerciſe.

In London, religion ſeems to be periodical, like an ague, which returns only once in ſeven days, and then attacks the inhabitants with the cold fit only, which phyſicians reckon the moſt fatal; the burning never ſucceeds in this country.

In fact, the whole buſineſs of London ſeems to be deſigned for the kingdom of this world; and that of Rome, for that of the other. If it be true, as the proteſtants pretend, that we have too much pomp and pageantry, in our way of worſhipping the author of our religion; is it not equally true, that they have too little? Shall we then, one moment dropping all attachment to every particular ſect of chriſtians, examine as philoſophers, whether theſe aſſertions are true or falſe; and conſidering man as he is,

endeavour

endeavour to decide ſomething more permanent, than has hitherto been determined upon this ſubject.

IT has been objected againſt the catholics, in favour of the proteſtants; that the former have deſerted the primitive way of worſhip, and introduced ten thouſand frivolous and idle ceremonies into their religion, which find no countenance in the goſpel; this latter, I think, has been fairly obviated in the writings of our churchmen.

BUT methinks, the ſuppoſing that the primitive mode of worſhip, when Chriſtianity was in its infancy, before any kingdom or government had received it, ſhould always continue in that ſtate, is juſt as ſenſible as to ſay, that becauſe we are at firſt children, we ſhould always continue ſo; or, that our Saviour being born in a place for the reception of cattle, ought to be worſhipped by none but cow-herds, ſhepherds, and grooms.

EVERY inſtitution, religious or civil, muſt have its birth, progreſs, maturity, and decline

perhaps, equally with animal nature. Things and ſyſtems, animate or inanimate, are obnoxious to this deſtiny; and if it were not contradicted in the ſacred ſcriptures, I ſhould be inclined to believe, that even the chriſtian religion, may one day or other feel this fatal effect, and a new diſpenſation recall mankind from the vices it is at preſent precipitated into; at leaſt, it ſeems neceſſary in this country of apoſtacy from the truth.

As there is no mode of worſhip laid down in thoſe writings, which have imparted to us the dictates of Chriſt; we may reaſonably ſuggeſt, that chriſtianity, like the firſt religion of nature, was deſignedly left in this manner, that legiſlators and potentates might adapt it to the different ſyſtems of government which they pleaſed; and to the nature of thoſe inhabitants, amongſt whom it was promulged: there are many paſſages in ſcripture which would ſupport ſuch an opinion, at leaſt which ſeem ſo to do.

For this reaſon, the nature of all mankind being much the ſame, in the days of the firſt pro-

propagating the goſpel; their exerciſes, arts, commerce, and employments, being extremely few, except in Greece and Italy; it was neceſſary that much time ſhould be employed in acts of devotion: the mind muſt be agitated like the ocean to keep it ſweet, and every part of it, the paſſions, ſenſes, faith, imagination, and reaſon, find ſome object which may anſwer to each faculty, to make it happy and at eaſe.

THOSE who have conceived that the original ſimplicity, which made the characteriſtic of the firſt chriſtians, was always to continue, have been extremely ignorant in the nature of man: it was neceſſary to oppoſe, at that time, that deluge of deifying the moſt infamous of men, who from being leſs than human under the title of emperors in this world, would be gods in the other, or the whole effect of religion had been deſtroyed. But when this rage was aboliſhed, human nature muſt again take place; tho' floods have drowned the lands and ſwept away the harveſt, yet it would be abſurd to think it muſt never be fair weather: tho' the common proceſs of nature, ſeems neceſſarily interrupted by thoſe revelations from heaven for

ſome time, yet the former manners will return; and thus the progreſſion of Chriſtianity from its primitive to its mature ſtate, has been as natural to it, as the paſſing from infancy to manhood. For theſe reaſons, have we not done right to catch the eye and ear, by objects of admiration and influence? muſt not the faith be kept alive, by objects adapted to the credulity of the human mind; which diſpoſition actuates indefinitely in human nature, if not the whole ſpecies; ſomething muſt inflame us by enthuſiaſm to acts of virtue, and damp us in the hour when the evil principle preſides; and thus ſecure us from violence and miſdeeds.

THE reaſon of that man who does not conceive things in this way, is extremely limited; he is either differently framed, or not acquainted with what paſſes in himſelf, or in the hearts of other men; he decides from too circumſcribed a knowledge, and calls that truth and right reaſon, which is the glimmering of a weak capacity, and only ſerves, like the dim ſepulchral lamp, to light him to diſeaſe and death.

AFTER having advanced thus far, it may be allowed, that ſome governments, and ſome people, may require leſs pompous application to every part of the underſtanding, than others; but certainly no civilized nation can be happily conducted, without ſomething of this nature.

IF the idleneſs of the Italians requires the attention of many religious ceremonies to preſerve them from ill actions, and keep their minds active; the Engliſh, a buſy commercial ſtate, may perhaps ſtand leſs in need of ſuch great numbers as are ſeen in Italy; if the imputation of idolatry be thrown upon us, becauſe we abound too much with ceremony; if tyranny over the minds of the people, be the ſarcaſm which falls on the Romiſh church; we may reply, that irreligion is the conſequence of neglecting the firſt, and anarchy, confuſion, and immorality in the people, from the too much indulgence in the other, in Great Britain.

IF it ſhould be objected, that by means of all that pageantry of devotion which is ſeen at Rome, the ſpirit which ſhould animate the chriſtian

chriſtian evaporates, and leaves the ſoul ſteril in acts of charity; it may be juſtly replied, that in Britain there is not enough to make the mind active, in ſearch of beneficence. Thus probably, it may ſeem that ſomething may be mended in each city, relating to the form and ſpirit of religion; and that tho' England requires leſs ceremony at this time than Rome; yet conſidering human nature as it is, there is more morality to be expected from that people, which has ſome object operating on every part of the mind, by the warmth of hope encouraging, and the chill of fear reſtraining; than from that where the whole number of individuals has almoſt forgotten, that there is a power which ſuperintends, and is ſuperior to man.

PRAY receive the bearer of this, with that reſpect which he deſerves; and conceal the contents from your right eye, if you read it with your left; in truth forget this and remember me. I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

To the Reverend Father DOMINICO MANZONI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

PERHAPS no nation has produced greater geniuſes, than this from whence I write this letter, in many parts of literature and knowledge; their philoſophers, poets, and mathematicians, are eſteemed and ſtudied every where; and a reputation of learning attributed to them, beyond the other kingdoms in Europe. It is beſides this, the peculiar honor of the individuals, that their productions have been owing to the force of their own genius, unaſſiſted and unencouraged by any thing from the throne; even to this hour, there is not a ſingle penſion given to any one, as the reward of literature, unleſs it be to that apoſtate of our order, who having revolted from the religion he profeſſed, and diſengaged himſelf from all the vows he had made (a liberty Sir Thomas More

More thought that no man could conſcientiouſly diſpenſe with), receives a penſion of two hundred pounds a year as long as he ſhall continue to write the lives of the ; how long this will continue you will judge from the nature of the man, a very ſterile ſample of which he has already given to the public; you would be delighted with the artifices which he has made uſe of, to imprint a belief of his being in continual danger of death from the hands or machinations of our order; it would not be ſurprizing to me, if I ſaw him Archbiſhop of Canterbury: So greedily thoſe ſenſible people ſwallow the improbable accounts he gives them, and believe that a man, who thinks himſelf bound by no oaths, becauſe he has a mind to break them, and that change of ſentiment diſſolves all obligation, is yet candid enough to tell nothing but truth in the tales he recites to them; after this can they laugh at catholics who give credit to the miracles of ſaints, and be ſurprized at the populace being in devotion before their ſhrines?

FROM this neglect of learned men it is, that the preſent decline of literature is ſo great: The men of letters have nothing but that harpy, a bookſeller, to give them bread; and is it poſſible that an author will for the ſake of honour alone ſtarve, whilſt he is giving the laſt finiſhings of his productions by repeated reviſals, for which he will not obtain one ſhilling better price? Can the *nonum prematur in annum* find entrance here?

IT is a ſcandal to the nation, ſince letters have given the kingdom its greateſt reputation, that thoſe who deſerve well on that account, ſhould be conſtantly haunted by that fiend neceſſity; and whilſt they are labouring for the inſtruction, happineſs, and entertainment of others, be deprived of all theſe themſelves.

EVERY thing that does not come from the hands of a genius, is either diſeſteemed, or pretended ſo to be: like the late king of Pruſſia in his tall troops, this nation receives none, of the common ſtandard. A genius will ſhew itſelf, it burſts ſpontaneous like flowers from the earth; it is a native of this clime, and therefore requires no artificial

artificial heat to bring it to perfection: This is the common talk of all; and yet the naturaliſt will tell them, that very few flowers in this varying clime blow well, without being ſhelter'd from the ſudden blights and froſts which are natural to it.

THEIR neighbours the French are of another ſentiment; the academy of ſcience furniſhes twenty penſions to men of genius; and their other academies honours and favourable reception to their members alſo; ſcarce a writer of note who is not at his eaſe, remains unrewarded. The celebrated Marivaux and Crebillion have been each very lately remunerated by the Marchioneſs of ——, who does honour to the king that takes her to his arms, and effaces every reproach by the favour which ſhe ſhews to learned men and artiſts. It ſhould be declared high treaſon for a king of any nation to have a miſtreſs, or be ſerved by a domeſtic, that is not a native of that land they live in.

SOVEREIGNS who feel leſs controul than their ſubjects, from all kinds of inclination, are more liable to purſue their deſires than other men; and indeed, ſpeaking humanly, they will

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and muſt be allowed in it; but then their follies ſhould be converted to as much uſe as poſſible; and what they give their favourites, ſhould return to the people. The ſun which robs the fields of their fragrance by exhalations, reſtores it again in dews and friendly ſhowers, to the refreſhing thoſe flowers which it parched in the zenith of its heat, and does not ſuffer them to be wafted to other lands, and denied to thoſe fields which firſt yielded them.

In this nation a man of ſenſe has very little power of aſſiſting himſelf, and improving, in polite company; there ſcarce remains a perſon of diſtinction who pays regard to men of letters; and the ladies, who have good natural capacities, have not yet imitated the French, in what would be more laudable than following the cut of a cap, or the dreſſing their hair, the preſiding at their own aſſemblies: there men of letters might meet, converſe, and learn purity of manners, elegance of converſation, and decency of raillery, from the reſpect which men naturally pay to the preſence of a polite woman. It is the ill fate of this

this nation to borrow the follies of France; and the good fortune of the French to adopt the excellencies of this iſland: You will ſuggeſt then from this continual intercourſe, what judgment threatens this kingdom, and what a glorious revolution there will arrive at laſt.

If genius furniſhes a man with ideas, it is education which affords them their dreſs; not that of ſchools and colleges, where the deſire of following the ancients in their very expreſſions, as near as two languages will ſuffer it, deſtroys the originality of thinking, which ſhould appear in all writings, and gives that the air of copy and plagiariſm, which the knowledge of the world would otherwiſe have rendered new, and original.

From hence it is, that thoſe men of ſtudy who have written on familiar ſubjects, have drawn the characters in their works with a mock exalted and ſtiff out-line, like the drawings of Albert Durer; and thoſe who have never ſtudied the claſſics, but written from what they call life, are too

too low, finical, and familiar, without that alert and eaſy grace which is to be ſeen in the paintings of Watteau. The firſt have deſcribed mankind as it is ſeen in moſt moral authors; the good unallay'd with weakneſs, the bad unimproved with virtues: The other as it generally looks in nature unexalted by ſuperior touches of genius and underſtanding, a uniform nothing in nature, like cyphers without a firſt figure to add value to the ſum; an every moment's object totally improper for entertainment or uſe.

THIS ſeems to be the true reaſon why ſtrangers complain, that the writers in this language are deficient in a certain grace and elegance, which are to be found amongſt the French and Italians, at the ſame time applauding their ſtrength of conception and hardineſs of expreſſion; the ſeeds of genius ſhoot out ſtrong in this ſoil, but the pruner's hand is not ſufficiently employed to make them bear the moſt exquiſite fruit to foreign palates. If the manners, and way of life, ſhould change to that which is known abroad; the women dictate

elegance to ſenſe, and grace to behaviour, and genius once more reviſit this iſland, we may yet ſee the other nations of Europe ſurpaſſed in all the parts of fine writing.

ADIEU, recommend me to ——

I am your moſt obedient.

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LETTER VIII.

To the Reverend Father FILIPPO BONINI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IN my letters to you, I have frequently hinted how deficient the police of this nation is in the knowledge of laws, which may prevent indecencies, outrages and theft, but to do all mankind juſtice; if the legiſlative capacity fails in this reſpect, it excells in another; and if the Engliſh are not much reſtrained from deſtroying themſelves and others, they are greatly encouraged to increaſe their ſpecies by every incentive to propagation. The number of the inhabitants makes the riches of a kingdom: of conſequence, the miniſter who encourages the propagation of mankind ought to be eſteemed a true patriot, and lover of his country; and from all I have gathered from antiquity, none ever excelled the preſent of this iſle, in that particular branch of enriching a land.

MARRIAGES in general take ſome time before they can be compleated: Cuſtom has made

a previous courtſhip neceſſary, of months or years; this is loſs of time, loſs of inhabitants, and loſs of wealth. In this nation, where the ſpirit of calculation is ſo much cheriſhed, where lives, hours and days are ſtrictly brought to account; and every minute's idleneſs comes into the computation of loſs and gain; where the ſabbath is look'd upon with an evil eye, becauſe it deſtroys one year's labour in ſeven; every delay comes into queſtion, and is conſidered as a loſs; for this reaſon all due encouragement is given to the increaſe of mankind, not by the old Roman law of the *Jus trium Liberorum*, but by an act againſt marriage, and by incentives to what is called ſimply fornication.

THRO' fear however, leſt ſo beneficial a ſcheme might languiſh and decay, objects are exhibited to catch every ſenſe, which may induce men to ſerve their country; every print-ſhop has its windows ſtuck full with indecent prints, to inflame deſire thro' the eye, and ſingers in the ſtreets charm your ears with laſcivious ſongs, to waken you to the ſame employment,

ployment, leſt you ſhould forget to what purpoſe you were born; for men are apt to forget their duty in this inſtance particularly. This is to know mankind, to ſerve a country, and be a miniſter; but as the night comes on, and the eye can no longer be ſolicited by viſible objects, there are innumerable women who walk the public ſtreets, and prompt their fellow-creatures with the ſoothing words of *my dear*; like Philip's ſlave, remembering them that they are men, and enticing them to their duty, and the enriching their country: The comedies repreſented on their ſtages have an excellent tendency to this patriot deſign, and all ſeems full of this uſeful intent. In this part of governing then, it muſt be allowed that the proteſtant legiſlators excell the catholic; liberty is the word; and therefore the harlots of England have full freedom to ſeduce all whom they can, and augment their ſpecies; whilſt ladies of this order at Rome are confined to one part of the city, ſhut up from the public good; thro' a miſtaken notion that they ſeduce the unwary, and ſpread diſeaſe to the deſtruction of particular happineſs between men and their wives.

THIS popiſh invention, of reſtraining propagation, is abominable; it is directly a contradiction to the ſcriptures, which tell us to increaſe and multiply. And therefore I hope his holineſs will iſſue a bull, which may aboliſh this reſtraint from the Roman ladies of pleaſure; and as the proteſtants of England have adopted the Gregorian ſtyle, tho' it was of popiſh invention, that you will in return ſtick the poſtures of Aretine in every window, and not ſuffering obſtinacy to oppoſe reaſon, becauſe it is proteſtant, give the ſame indulgence at Rome, which is to be found in London. At my return I hope to find every thing of this kind, as it is here; your ſtreets fill'd with harlots and libidinous ſingers, with full liberty to propagate our ſpecies by law and public encouragement, unfetter'd by matrimony. I am

Your moſt obedient.

LET-

LETTER IX.

To the Reverend Father DOMINICO MANZONI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

THERE is but one way, as it appears to me, by which the religion of a country ſhould be examined by the eye of a philoſopher; which is, if it anſwers all thoſe faculties in human nature, which will find objects for themſelves, if the legiſlature does not take this proviſion on itſelf; that is, the ſenſes, paſſions, faith, imagination and reaſon of man, ought to be exerciſed and influenced by the various parts of a religion, eſtabliſhed in all countries, where men muſt be reſtrain'd by mental ties from evil-doing, and ſtimulated to virtue by hopes of future conſiderations. If we conſider the nature of man, and compute as well as we are able, the number of thoſe who ought to be intruſted with the liberty of thinking for themſelves, or drawing concluſions in things relating to their own intereſt; we ſhall conclude, I believe, that the people of England are not the moſt likely to con-

ſider themſelves ſtrictly tied to the rules of religion and morality.

THE man who examines, whether an action ſhould be tranſacted or not, which would increaſe his wealth, (tho' not ſtrictly honeſt) heſitates leſs at injuſtice than one following implicitly the dictates of religion, which tell him it is iniquitous, and will ruin his future felicity.

DEBATING on matters of intereſt, like deliberating in love, is attended with conqueſt on the ſide of paſſion; the love of money and the love of the ſexes, carry it from the ſoundeſt reaſoning which finds no aſſiſtance from hopes and fears; honor in one caſe, and probity in another, are extremely apt to yield in all conteſts, where the head and heart are at variance; and human nature unaſſiſted by the ordinances of religion, has not virtue ſufficient to be honeſt.

FOR this reaſon there muſt be checks made to theſe propenſities in mankind, for the ſenſes, as well as the other parts of the underſtanding. In this great city, where commerce and the love of gain, occupy all mankind in one ſhape or another,

other, the mind, hurried in amaſſing wealth, is apt to forget the ſtrict rules of probity, tho' a chriſtian.

It is not ill-founded, to my manner of thinking, therefore in human nature, that the Hoſt ſhould be carried publicly to the departing ſoul; it may be of as much uſe to the living as the dying, and awake a ſenſe of duty in thoſe who ſee it in the ſtreets, who are apt to be remiſs without frequent admonitions; it may ſuſpend the hand one moment from deeds of injuſtice, and by awakening the hopes and fears which would otherwiſe lye ſleeping, preſerve men from impoſing, and being impoſed upon.

Without entering into the arguments for and againſt tranſubſtantiation; as an affair of this world, is it not better that all Chriſtians ſhould believe it than not? will it not affect the mind with more ſolemnity, if the God of our worſhip be believed to be preſent in this ſacrament, than not? and would that teſt of Chriſtianity be permitted to be ſo trifled with, as it is by the proteſtants who pretend to conform to the eſta-

bliſhed

bliſhed church of England, if the real preſence was received as the doctrine of the eſtabliſhed religion? For the mutual advantage then of human nature, if the belief of the actual preſence is not abſolutely neceſſary, it ſeems requiſite that the ſacrament ſhould be conſidered as the moſt ſacred of all obligations: and yet, the corrupted heart, or pernicious head of a certain biſhop of this nation, has produced a book on the Euchariſt, with deſign to annihilate all conſideration of its being ſacred, a mere health to the pious memory of Jeſus Chriſt, King William, or Oliver Cromwell; as if men wanted to have the reſtraints, which keep the mind from running into contempt of religion and her ordinances, rendered leſs obligatory than they are.

FROM this it is, that the Preſbyterians, who are obliged to take the Euchariſt before they can poſſeſs any place under the crown; moſt ſolemnly in the face of heaven receive this ſacrament, the proof and pledge of their conformity to the church of England, the moſt ſacred of oaths, and then totally diſregard it the next day, and all their future lives; conſider-

ing it in no light but as a convivial ceremony. Should a man who can trifle with theſe inſtitutions, be intruſted with the public welfare? Can there be an expectation of honor, or probity, in that heart, which has been mean enough to yield to ſo baſe, and ſo infamous a practice? Yet, the biſhop has been exalted to the moſt acceptable ſee in the kingdom, by the miniſter, for this performance, and others equally beneficial; and his praiſe is the ſubject of all thoſe who ſtand in need of ſupport for the practices of occaſional conformity; he has done more miſchief to the cauſe of religion, than all the deiſtical writers of the world, and ſapp'd the foundation of thoſe principles which actuate more ſtrongly than reaſon, in producing happineſs in man: It ſeems to me, that the rebel to the religion of his country, ſhould not be better treated, than the rebel to his king; even here I ſhall venture to ſay, that tho' they both ought to be preſerved, religion and the prince, that the religion of a country is of as much conſequence to its welfare, as the ſovereign who governs it; and the perſon who employs his head and hand to the deſtruction of the eſta-

bliſhed worſhip of his native land, is but little likely to exert them in defence of his ſovereign.

FROM what has been ſaid, does it not appear, that the catholics are more philoſophical in believing, and ſupporting the belief, of the real preſence, than the Proteſtants who reject it?

METHINKS the word truth, tho' it has made ſo much clamour in the world, has yet never been well underſtood; the reaſon is, that few people have yet defined what it is. Every thing which is the object of faith, and received by any mind, is always conſidered as true; therefore, the manner in which all things are conceived, is the particular truth of each individual mind: but as this muſt for ever make one eternal claſh in the belief, behaviour, and actions of mankind, there remains, that the objects of faith not being capable of receiving any demonſtrative proof, the utility which accompanies any of them is the only truth they can poſſeſs. Truth in this ſenſe being abſolutely unlike mathematical truths, where every part is perfectly underſtood, and the whole reſult fairly comprehended.

In this inſtance, it means nothing but right or fitting: Thus, rain is truth, in reſpect to its being right and fitting for the productions of the earth, without which no ſuſtenance is to be expected. The whole vegetable and animal world were originally formed with reference to this fluid; and in like manner the mind was divided into various parts, to each of which there are proper objects adapted by the hands of nature.

Does it not appear like reaſon to ſay, that objects adapted to influence the faith and paſſions to good works are true; that is, right or fitting for human nature; tho' they cannot be proved to be logically, or mathematically true. In what ſenſe are the laws of a nation to be conſidered but in this light? We acquieſce in the belief of their being true, becauſe they are right and uſeful, without ſeeing the reaſon on which they are founded; and we ought alike to to receive the objects of our faith as true, becauſe they are right and fitting to our welfare.

The public inſtitution of a religion and its objects, are the truth of religion in every country,

try, from which no one has a greater right to differ, than he has from the eſtabliſhed laws; members of ſocieties having given up all right in both to think for themſelves, at leaſt to act and ſpeak in conſequence of ſuch thinking.

THUS then, each religion eſtabliſhed is the truth of that nation in which it exiſts; yet, there are ſome religions more, and ſome leſs, adapted than others to the public utility, in particular parts; and in this reſpect of the real preſence, it ſeems to me more philoſophical and wiſe, to adopt than reject that belief. A nation will be more probably reſtrained from acts of injuſtice and rapine where it is received, than where it is not, which is all that ſeems neceſſary to conſtitute the truth of things of this kind.

REMEMBER of what conſequence this letter is to me, let it be beheld by no eye but yours; indeed your own intereſt ſpeaks plain enough, that it be committed to the flames. I am,

Your moſt obedient.

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LETTER X.

To the Reverend Father ANTONIO COCCHI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

THERE is nothing which the Proteſtants endeavour to turn into ridicule with more pleaſure, than the infallibility of the Pope, particularly the diſſenters from the church of England; and yet there is nothing in which the laſt reſemble us ſo much, as in that particular.

INDEED they carry the idea much higher than we do; for whereas we catholics, knowing that infallibility muſt reſt ſome where, or which is the ſame thing, an implicit obedience to the dictates of ſome one council or head, have modeſtly given this to the head of the church; whilſt the diſſenters have in direct contradiction, made each a Pope of himſelf; that is, ſet himſelf up as an infallible judge in all ſpiritual matters.

To me it ſeems, if there be an abſurdity in making one infallible head, there is yet a greater in making ten thouſand infallibilities; and there is even more modeſty and reaſon, in allowing that the perſon who has applied his whole ſtudies and talents to the diſcovering and adapting religious objects to the mind of man; than in every taylor who leaps from his ſhop-board, or cobler who ſallies from his ſtall, ſetting up for an infallible judge in matters which he cannot underſtand, both from the nature of the ſubject, and the degree of his capacity: In England therefore, every Preſbyterian is a Pope, and in Italy there is but one.

It is the avowed principle of the Diſſenters in this kingdom, that each man has a right to decide for himſelf in affairs of religion, which is the ſame thing as to ſay, that men have a right to determine wrong in theſe matters; or, that every thing is both right and wrong in this ſubject. If two men are of opinions, that are diametrically oppoſite to each other in every tenet; each of them it is ſaid, has a right to decide for himſelf; one then muſt be wrong, or nothing comes

come under that denomination; and thus, in conſequence this man has a right to decide wrong; or which is yet more abſurd, as they aſſert, that whatever each decides with reſpect to himſelf is the truth; it follows, that what is wrong being the ſame as what is falſe; right and wrong, truth and falſehood, are one and the ſame thing; this is yet a more manifeſt abſurdity, than the infallibility in the Pope. The contradictions between truth and falſehood, right and wrong, are not incurred in the ſuppoſing that infallible power in one man, which are manifeſtly the conſequence, in allowing it the general right of all men; hence it ſeems, that the Preſbyterians and Papiſts do not differ in the article of infallibility, but where it ſhall be placed; whether every tinker, taylor, and mechanic, ſhall poſſeſs this power, as the Diſſenters conceive, or in the head of the church, as the Papiſts profeſs to allow it.

INDEED, the eſtabliſhed religion of England obſerves a medium between theſe extremes, and without allowing infallibility in the head of their church, acknowledges, that he has an authority to rule and determine what is, and what is not,

to be admitted into their worſhip. Thus then, this heinous ſin of ſuppoſing an infallibility in the Pope, ſo laughed at and ridiculed by the ſectaries in this country, is yet more glaringly abſurd in their own tenets and doctrines.

It is a ſettled law, that whoever obtains a place in the hands of the government in this kingdom, muſt take the oaths of allegiance and ſupremacy; that is ſwear fealty to the king, and renounce the Pope as being the head of the church; or, which is the ſame thing, that the king is the head of his church: this excludes all catholics, who tho' they would willingly take that of allegiance to the king on the throne, have not yet dared to trifle with their conſciences and abjure the Pope; if this is no proof of their prudence, it is of their integrity; and that they are yet bound by ſome principle, as this circumſtance excludes them from all places and employments of honor and profit.

The Preſbyterians on the contrary, without heſitation ſwear allegiance, and take the oath of ſupremacy, allowing the king to be head of his church; which laſt article is contrary to the firſt

firſt principle in their Diſſention; that each man has a right to think for himſelf in religious affairs, independant of all powers upon earth.

THUS the catholic is excluded and diſtruſted, becauſe he has conſcience, honor and probity; and the Preſbyterian cheriſhed and promoted, becauſe he trifles with the moſt ſacred obligation on earth openly, in direct violation of his avowed principles. Methinks this partial toleration is knowing little of mankind, and being but weak in the great affairs of adminiſtration. In defence of this they alledge, that the Preſbyterian principle is ſtrong in favour of liberty, and the catholic of arbitrary power. The catholic Cantons of Switzerland are as free as the Proteſtant; the Preſbyterian principle is in nature deſpotic, and in the days of Cromwell, was the occaſion of more bloodſhed and deſpotiſm, than all the attempts of catholics have produced in this nation: did it not end in the hands of that uſurper as arbitrarily, as it could have done in Charles I's? and would it not have continued in that manner, if his ſucceſſor had been equal to the taſk of governing?

NAY theſe very Preſbyterians, thoſe advocates for liberty of conſcience, were they not equally deſpotic during the grand rebellion with what they impute to catholics? they had no ſooner paſt the ocean and landed in America, than they ill-treated thoſe who differed from them in religious ſentiments; inflicting that perſecution on others, which they exclaimed againſt, and fled from themſelves. Thus it appears, that extremes are all the ſame; fire and froſt deſtroy vitality alike, and a rank Preſbyterian is at the bottom ſomething worſe, than what they ſo liberally impute to us of the Romiſh communion. I am,

Your moſt obedient.

LETTER XI.

To the Reverend Father FILIPPO LAURA *at* Rome.

Dear Sir;

WHATEVER may have been the cauſe of the decline of the Roman ſtate; it is not luxury which has been the ruin of this. Men are too apt to attribute the cauſe of things to ſome viſible object, which accompanies or precedes any change, and neglecting to examine within, miſtake the ſhadow for the reality. That nations are generally ruin'd when luxury prevails, may be true; but it is from the ſame cauſe that luxury and ruin come together.

PEOPLE of every ſtate that is poor, and driven to frequent diſtreſs, have no objects which can tempt them to eternal diſſipation; the ruling paſſions in that land, are the love of their god, and the love of their country; the ſecondary, themſelves. The Swiſs amidſt the de-

ſights of France, pines to death thro' pure love for his native mountains; and the Dutchman, worth a hundred thouſand pounds, ſighs for lands of gold and ophir. The only bond which can unite a whole nation are the two firſt, and the laſt is that quality which diſſolves this power of attraction, whatever is the intervening cauſe in a ſtate, that diſſipates the ſpirit of patriotiſm, or baniſhes the influence of religion, at the ſame time it lets the mind looſe to all kinds of depravity and deſtruction. However, Sir, when I ſay that the laſt paſſion is that which deſtroys a nation; I would not be underſtood to mean, that the love of ourſelves becomes culpable but in the wrong application and exceſs of it.

If we caſt our eyes upon two neighbouring nations, we may plainly perceive, that luxury does not ruin, nor parcimony in the individuals ſave a ſtate.

France, tho' it has been long practiſed in the higheſt luxury, in a much more refined and exceſſive way than is to be ſeen in England, or perhaps ever was known in any nation of Europe, has yet increaſed in power, extent, riches and ſci-

ence, ſince the introduction of that taſte amongſt them; and Holland has ſunk into contempt and ruin amidſt the greateſt parcimony, and moſt exceſſive meanneſs of ſaving: Hence it is evident, that neither luxury deſtroys, nor frugality ſuſtains a ſtate; but ſome uniting principle, which combining all the individual particles, moves the whole together, and imparts a force to the center, of the greateſt importance, when the maſs is once put into motion; it is this which preſerves the conſequence of a people; whereas each particle being let looſe, and diſunited, the whole moves without effect or regard. From theſe depends the good or evil of a nation; the firſt is a bullet which, from its union, driven from a cannon acts with efficacy and import; the other ſmall ſhot, which diſunited, have no effect but upon ſmall things.

The love of money, whenever it takes poſſeſſion of the heart, declares war againſt all human nature. As the object of trade is the poſſeſſing riches; the more that purſuit is encouraged, the more will this love of money prevail, till at laſt it becomes the ſole motive to all actions.

The Dutch, infatuated by the love of riches, have ſupplied the French during the war with that powder and ball, which was to be the death and deſtruction of their own native troops the next day; and the higheſt ranks amongſt them have ſold themſelves, their towns, and nation's intereſt, till it is become contemptible, to the French; and thus are undone without one ſpark of luxury having ever been lighted up amongſt them.

The French officer, loſt in luxury at Paris, no ſooner hears the drum beat to arms, but he flies to the field, and behaves becoming the braveſt man; his own honor and his monarch's glory form the union, and create incentives which actuate the whole nation to this behaviour. The Dutchman ſculks in his town, and, contracted into himſelf, plods how he may draw ſome perſonal advantage and preſerve ſelf in ſafety from the circumſtances around him. Thus the firſt grows great with his country's greatneſs; and the latter, meanly conceiving he can create a particular advantage from that of his country, blinded by ſelf-intereſt ſees it ſink, tho' he muſt fall with it at laſt.

THUS parcimony does not ſave, nor luxury deſtroy a nation; it is ſome other diſpoſition, blended with either, which muſt ſave or deſtroy a ſtate. Every exerciſe of the love of wealth is accompanied with the idea of ſelf, in augmenting its own ſtores, and diminiſhing thoſe of others; or, which comes to the ſame thing, that of being richer than every one elſe: this diſunites every man from every other, creates a ſeparate intereſt in the breaſt of each individual, and increaſes the paſſion of ſelf-love, which it is the duty of every nation to diſcourage; it deſtroys the univerſal good by foſtering the private; thus nations become poor, whilſt the individuals gnaw their way thro' the vitals of their mother into immenſe riches, or, like young pelicans, live on their parent's blood. Parcimony in the inhabitants of a country is a virtue, if they ſave from themſelves to ſerve the public; and, like the old Romans, empty their own coffers to fill thoſe of the national treaſury. This frugality ariſes from a different motive from that which robs its country to enrich itſelf. This laſt ſort of men eſteem their own nation preferable to no other,

but

but becauſe in time of diſtreſs, they can enrich themſelves by its ruin. It is the moſt amazing of all things, what fortunes were made by thoſe men who during the late war joined with the miniſter and their enemies, to plunder this kingdom by loans of money at treble intereſt, and aſſiſted in endeavouring to ſink that ſhip which ſcarce finds power of ſwimming at preſent, except the tameneſs with which this iniquity was permitted; theſe are the nation's friends, if we are to believe the Courtier and Whig.

THE idea of luxury in England, is ill underſtood; it does not deſerve that name; it is profuſion only, another ſpecies of ſelf: All that is expended here, at leaſt the greateſt part of it, is on the individual poſſeſſor. That of the table is at taverns, where each of the company pays for himſelf: In France the notion of liberality accompanies expence; the men of that turn impart to their friends and acquaintance, that which an Engliſhman beſtows on himſelf alone; the ten guineas, which this latter at a tavern ſwallows ſelfiſhly down his own throat at

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London, ſhall be communicated in Paris with gaiety and good humour to a company, who are entertained with politeneſs and eaſe; even noblemen of great eſtates and high places in this country, will meanly ſend a turtle, to be eaten at a tavern amongſt their acquaintance, club their five guineas with the others, and ſcuffle off large plates to be ſent to their ladies, who admire it extremely, but do not like that their good men ſhould have that liberality which makes the genuine characteriſtic of nobility, and entertain their friends at home. They tremble at the fatigue, poor women! and pretend they cannot ſupport ſuch hurry; as if they were the cooks, obliged to dreſs it.

In France, luxury is combined with liberality; this keeps up the mind to its true ſpirit: In England, with avarice; which debaſes it to the laſt degree. It is the ſelfiſhneſs of the Dutchman, and not the pleaſure of the Frenchman, that threatens the ruin of this country, if ruin is to come from either of them.

Luxury, in the manner in which it is uſed in France, has the ſame effect that parcimony had in ancient

ancient Rome. In rich ſtates the national ſupplies are kept up by the conſumption of thoſe articles which form the luxury of a ſtate; and the liberality, with which it is given, preſerves a true ſpirit of generoſity in the mind of men.

IN Rome, poor in its beginning, the national expence could be ſaved from the private alone; the œconomy of the individual was only able to ſupply the wants of the public, and the minds of the citizens were enobled by thus giving to the general good.

IN England where all is ſelf, their profuſion as well as their parcimony, the mind is contracted and debaſed, and the nation declining from that cauſe. If the chevalier de St. George was not to the miniſter what the devil is to ſinners, it had been ruin'd long ſince: The one keeps many a chriſtian honeſt thro' fear, as the other has many a miniſter from taking too haſty ſtrides, to the placing themſelves in abſolute power: ſince the laſt rebellion, the eldeſt ſon ſecreting himſelf, and the other being turn'd prieſt, the terrors from

that

that quarter are much alleviated, and ruin advances with larger ſteps.

IT is not in the luxury of eating alone, that this ſelfiſhneſs prevails; their collections of paintings, and other faſhionable ſtudies, are all for themſelves. In France and Italy, thoſe curioſities are made to ſhew how much the maſter is obliged to thoſe who think them worth their attention. In England, to tell you how much you ought to be obliged to the maſter that lets you ſee them; the difficulty is great which you muſt overcome to obtain a ſight of their curioſities, and the maſter conſiders it worth ten ſhillings, which the ſervant receives, and oftentimes double that ſum: by this means a domeſtic in many families has as good an employment as many at court; and as much money has been paid for the ſeeing many houſes, as they have coſt building.

THUS, it is not luxury which threatens this nation with ruin; it is that mean ſelf-love which is mixed in all the actions of the preſent generation, that is to be dreaded only on this account: the money which is ſpent, is not in the liberal

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and noble manner of their anceſtors; when public tables received men of wit and learning, as in the days of Charles the ſecond, and queen Anne; but in the purchaſe of boroughs, and in that company of fellows who are pimps to the ruin of their country: this contracts the nature of their ſouls into that of traffickers; the firſt miniſter is only a larger broker than thoſe on the exchange, and deals in more pernicious commodities.

THERE are ten thouſand things which may be inſtanced, to ſhew the contracted ſpirit of this nation; no painter, however excellent, can ſucceed amongſt them, that is not engaged in painting pourtraits. Canaletti, whoſe works they admired whilſt he reſided at Venice; at his coming to London, had not in a whole year the employment of three months. Watteau, whoſe pictures are ſold at ſuch great prices at preſent, painted never a picture but two which he gave to Dr. Mead, during the time he reſided here. At the ſame time, Van Loo who came hither with the reputation of painting pourtraits very well; was obliged to keep three or four ſubaltern

painters

painters for drapery and other parts, whoſe pictures nine out of ten, from hurry and other things, are not better than the firſt ſigns which hang in the ſtreets; yet, every one trembled leſt his own ſweet face ſhould not be drawn by him. Self is the moſt delightful object which ſelf can behold; from this ſpirit it is, that painters of the ſuperior kind never find encouragement in this city, the connoiſſeurs of this nation will not give ſix-pence for the production of any man who paints in their own country, becauſe others can have the ſame performance; it muſt be the ſelfiſh idea of having what no other man has, which makes the pleaſure of the poſſeſſor, and not the true merit of the production.

THIS, tho' it extinguiſhes all advancement of the imitative arts in the ſublimeſt part of them, is of great uſe to the dealers in pictures; it has converted many a ſooty old woman into a Rembrand's; Raphael's, Guido's, Carrache's, and Titian's, are to be found in every collection, undoubtedly belonging to theſe painters, becauſe the godfathers who gave them theſe names are ſtill alive, and can anſwer for their being originals.

An Engliſhman of no note, thinks he cannot make you a more acceptable preſent than his own picture; as he knows that the deareſt thing on earth to himſelf, is himſelf, he fanſies he makes you the moſt valuable donation, in giving you that other ſelf; tho' the whole actions of his life have been without one inſtance of a good heart, or good underſtanding. Thus, in a thouſand inſtances of expence, all terminates in ſelf, and communicates a contracted and limited ſpirit; whereas, liberality added to expence, enlarges and exalts the mind; the one reſembles that peculiar power of attraction which belongs to particular bodies, which drawing only to itſelf, diſſolves and counter-acts the general union; the other, that power which, diffuſing its influence every-where, holds together the univerſal frame of nature, which is liberal and productive of all the benefits we receive. Adieu, I am,

Yours moſt obediently.

LETTER XII.

To the Reverend Father DOMINICO MANZONI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

I have formerly ſaid in my letters to you, that the cauſe of the decline of religion in England, was owing to that liberty which each man takes, in deciding for himſelf in theſe matters; from thence it happens, that tho' there may not be more than five hundred nominal ſects, yet there are almoſt as many different opinions as there are various heads; and nothing in either of them in which all unite; from this it proceeds that the true fire of devotion is diſſipated in diſpute, and the fervour which attends our worſhip annihilated and unknown in this country.

THO' this diſcord makes great part of the neglect of public worſhip, and diſregard of the author of all, yet there are other reaſons which conduce to this effect, which were formerly unknown or unobſerved by me.

It is natural to the mind of man to be more ardent in obtaining its deſires, than grateful in its returns for the receiving the completion of them; the cauſe of the inequality of theſe paſſions, ſeems to me to ariſe from this, that no one thing which we can poſſeſs, anſwers to that excellence of it, which we have entertained in idea; the mind therefore being greatly diſappointed in poſſeſſing the enjoyment which it expected to receive, becomes cool in its returns of gratitude to the Being who beſtowed it; and this, whether it be to the Giver of all, or to our fellow-creatures?

Whoever therefore is at eaſe, and in affluence, is neglectful of acknowledgments; whilſt the perſon in expectation, and deſire, is active and humble: the firſt will be leſs buſied in devotion to the God who has given, than the latter who expects: the firſt will ſooner think himſelf independant of all things and all beings, than he who finds in himſelf dependance, and want of many things, and much aſſiſtance; thus riches create irreligion.

IF this be true, that kind of policy which renders men moſt independant of their Maker, is moſt likely to extirpate religion, and with that generally all the valuable qualities of the heart diſappear; we give to thoſe in want becauſe we have taſted of that bitter cup ourſelves, or becauſe we conceive we may naturally fall into that condition; the man ſurrounded with plenty and ſecurity who has not felt diſtreſs, is leſs likely to impart, than another who is not in that ſituation and has taſted of affliction; this is generally found to be a true obſervation. Methinks therefore, this dependance on a ſuperior power, ſhould not be annihilated, ſince charity and probity depend ſo much upon the believing that we are in a ſtate of danger, and in the hands of ſomething ſuperior to man.

SECURITY deſtroys our fears and our devotion, and thence in great part proceeds this neglect of worſhip, which is to be ſeen in this nation; the power of inſuring a ſhip at ſea, or houſes and effects at home, if what I have ſaid be true, is therefore productive of this independance and neglect.

THE merchant who has ſecured his property by inſurance, from waves, winds, and ſhipwreck, on the ocean; and from fires at home, is more at eaſe than if he had no ſuch power of inſuring; he is leſs apt from nature to aſk protection from heaven, and be charitable with the view of receiving favours in return, than he who is under the actual influence of all theſe riſques. Reaſon as you will on this ſubject, and exalt the notion of the human ſpecies as you pleaſe, ſuch is the nature of man; he will leſs probably defraud, who fears being viſited with calamities of the above kind, than he who, ſecure from theſe chances, purſues his intereſt, unadmoniſhed and unchecked by ſuch apprehenſions. The inſurers, on the other hand, where this loſs of devotion in the merchant ought to be accumulated, compute and reaſon in another manner; they conclude from a computation of chances of all the ſhips which ſail, and all the houſes which are inſured, and draw the idea of advantage and profit from the whole calculation; they are therefore unactuated from that ſpirit of devotion, by their ſecurity being diffuſed thro' the whole of commerce and building;

ing; their concern is too little in any one place to be much afraid for particular accidents.

THUS this idea of ſecurity in property diſſipates the ſpirit of religion; the heart of him who is ſecure and at eaſe, is never ſo truly animated with gratitude, as his is with deſire who wiſhes to ſucceed; and from thence this frigidity of devotion, and neglect of worſhip, is partly ſtolen upon this nation without their being acquainted with the motive.

NOTHING is ſo flattering and prevalent in the minds of men, as the love of independancy; it is therefore no wonder that theſe inſurances have ſo univerſally prevailed; yet, ſince no lucrative advantage to the whole community can be obtained by theſe inſtitutions, the tranſfer of property only from one man to another, being the conſequence of their loſs or gain; it may be worth while for a legiſlator to conſider, whether dependance in the mind of man on the ſupreme Being, ſhould be leſſened by theſe inſtitutions, and the reſtraints from ill actions and incentives to good diminiſhed, for the ſake even of no temporal advantage to the whole.

If the cauſe of God was ſimply to be oppoſed to the deſire of wealth, I know this nation too well to doubt one moment which would be the victor.

It ſeems to me alſo, that the great debauchery which is ſeen in this city, the total inattention to all acts of devotion, and irreligion amongſt the loweſt people, ariſe in great part from the ſame cauſe.

In this kingdom there is an act of the legiſlature, which obliges all the pariſhes to maintain their poor; nothing ſeems more humane, or more worthy the care of a legiſlator, than this inſtitution: ſcarce any man living, who had not ſeen the effects of this law, but would approve of it, and yet the conſequence is this, that the ſtreets of London are filled with ſuch objects of miſery, as are to be ſeen in no other city and no other nation.

The poor claim the revenue ariſing from this tax as their proper right, they receive it without thankfulneſs, the giver does not bequeath

it

it from the principle of charity, nor the receiver take it with the ſenſation of gratitude.

THE firſt depends upon it in ſickneſs and old age, is leſs ſolicitous to ſave, than thoſe of other nations, till he becomes habitually profuſe; he ſees the eſtabliſhment is of man's ordaining, and not depending on charity, that principle eſtabliſhed by providence in the human heart, is not touched with gratitude at the proviſion; whereas if this aſſiſtance came from the good diſpoſition of the giver, the cauſe being inviſible to vulgar minds, the God of all would receive their acknowledgment, and the ſpirit of devotion be preſerved living amongſt theſe moſt deſpicable creatures.

IF if they depended on heaven for their ſupport, they would be more religious; if they were influenced by religion, they would be leſs abandoned in their behaviour: thus, this ſeeming good act, turns to a national evil, and there is more diſtreſs amongſt the poor of London, than any where in Europe; ſuch drunkenneſs both in male and female, as is inconceivable to you who have never paſſed the channel which divides England and France; however, this laſt vice is

become a national advantage; the revenue ariſing from ſpirituous liquors is ſo very conſiderable, that the miniſters, having drenched the nation in debt ſo deeply, are reduced to be much obliged to thoſe whoſe vices aſſiſt them in raiſing taxes for their ſupport.

SHALL we then exclaim in praiſe of the ſagacity of that miniſter, who converts the ſins of the people to the advantage of the whole; or ſhall we pity that nation whoſe health, morality, and religion, are duped to the pernicious ſchemes of deſtructive men, and whoſe vices cannot be corrected, leſt they and the revenue ſuffer. I am,

Yours.

LETTER XIII.

To the Reverend Father LORENZO FRANCIOSINI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

NOTHING is more the ridicule of the people of this nation, than that ſet of idle drones, as they are pleaſed to denominate thoſe men, who, dedicated to the good of mankind, give themſelves up to the ſervice of religion; they deſpiſe from their ſouls, a people who can ſuffer ſuch uſeleſs members in a nation; beings who live on the toil and labour of other men.

I ſhall not enter into a vindication of theſe pious men, the reflections of proteſtants do not affect them, and you and I want no conviction of their utility.

ALL that I ſhall remark is, that the ſole objection to them ariſes from their being devoted to religion; change that name, and as great a proof of weakneſs is to be found amongſt theſe ſharp-ſighted philoſophers of England.

FOR

For inſtance, put fine-cure places and trade in the room of religion, and Eaſt India company in that of monks, and it will appear that the people of England are at preſent greater dupes to the Eaſt India Directors, than ever they have been to the clergy at any time.

In the moſt reigning hour of the [illegible] religion, when the clergy had [illegible] poſſeſſions and power, the mone[illegible] their hands remained in the ki[illegible] the poor and many others received aſſiſtance from it; it is certain theſe churchmen lived in great affluence and ſplendor at that time.

At preſent, the gold and ſilver which is gained by other trades, from the weſtern world, is exported by this company for teas, china, and other uſeleſs commodities; thus, the other merchants work to enrich this kingdom, and this company to impoveriſh it for their own private advantage; many millions having been exported, and totally annihilated with reſpect to the nation, ſince the eſtabliſhment of this pernicious company. Is this convent of directors

leſs pernicious, than thoſe of the monks were formerly? or, is their ſplendor and affluence more moderate than thoſe of the clergy? If the latter received too great a revenue, they exported leſs, and conſequently were leſs prejudicial than theſe gentlemen in that reſpect.

YET ſuch is the ſhort-ſightedneſs of the preſent adminiſtration, that this company is encouraged to the nation's ruin, and the people tamely ſee a ſet of men ſelected from the reſt, making them their property, and wallowing in riches: unleſs I am miſinformed, the whole profit of this trade riſes from what is imported and ſold to their fellow-countrymen, and not on what is carried abroad.

DOES not this appear as ſilly, and ſhew as great an infatuation, as being ſubjected to the artifices of Prieſts? and if trade was fallen into as much diſgrace as religion, would it not appear as great a reflection on the underſtanding of a nation, to be the property of an Eaſt India director, as of a capuchin fryar? For this reaſon, unleſs the miniſtry, and this company, drew ſome reciprocal advantage different from that

of

of the public, this inſtitution had long ſince been aboliſhed; notwithſtanding this may be the mutual advantage of the above mentioned men, it is become the people's intereſt to reform this power, and the abuſe of it, as much at leaſt as it was that of the power of the clergy, at the reformation; without it, as it appears to my eyes, and to thoſe of father ******, who is well inſtructed in theſe affairs, this nation muſt be undone without another enemy.

IF he informs me right, there have been forty millions of money coined ſince the reſtoration; of which ſum there remains circulating in the hands of the natives, at the higheſt calculation, not more than fourteen millions, and according to ſome not more than twelve.

THUS, it is plain that the trade of the Eaſt Indies, and ſome other means which may be hereafter explained, have drained this nation continually of its caſh; the pool has been running out at the lower end, as faſt as it has filled from the ſource. Since the eſtabliſhment of the Eaſt India company, this nation has only in-

creaſed in viſionary wealth, by jobbs and loans in time of neceſſity, there being, according to ſome well founded computations, as much wealth in the kingdom at the expulſion of James the ſecond, as at this moment, and ſcarce any taxes; the whole being no more than two millions annually levied.

THE veil which covers this diminution of caſh is the bank, who lending to the miniſter paper in the place of money, and it being received as ſuch in all payments, conceals the eſcape of that ſpecie which is continually deſerting this land; till at laſt it will become too viſible to be unobſerved, and too great to be remedied.

To ſay the truth, his holineſs drew large ſums of money, during the reigning of the catholic faith, from this iſland; but then the German ſubſidies are as fatal at preſent, as the glory of the church was at that time; and of what conſequence is it to the ſubjects of this nation, whether electing and ſuſtaining an emperor of Germany, or a Pope at Rome, plunder them of the fruits of their labour?

THE

THE making a king of the Romans is to a Briton as ridiculous an object in itſelf, as recovering the holy ſepulchre from the hands of the Saracens, and a cruſade not more viſionary, than the ſuſtaining a ballance of power in Europe.

THE ſpirit of religious warfare is loſt, and the latter remains to lull the people [illegible] the money from them with leſs [illegible] thus this nation, however it may value itſelf for its being enlightened in philoſophy and good ſenſe, is in fact, all prejudice a-part, as weak in intellects, and as much ſubjected to deluſion in the days of George the ſecond, as before the reformation in the days of Henry the ſecond, and Thomas à Becket; the object is changed, but the folly remains, and the latter will probably prove more fatal than the former.

FROM all I can perceive, the getting free from prieſts, has duped the inhabitants to Eaſt India companies, bank and South-ſea directors, ſine-cures of great profits, and deceits in public

public offices; and tho' the ſituation of the kingdom may flatter the mole-eyed with ideas of liberty unknown to their anceſtors; yet, to their miniſters and their agents they are at preſent as great ſlaves, as to the kings and clergy before the reformation. I am,

Moſt ſincerely.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

To the Reverend Father CURTIO MARINELLI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

THEOLOGISTS have adapted [illegible] manners in their accou[illegible] one that the Author of all h[illegible] creation; from the perfection of the creator the work muſt be likewiſe perfect, and therefore it has needed no intervening attention ſince its completion.

THIS is one way; others have ſuppoſed that tho' the creation was the work of a perfect being, yet that it requires at certain times farther ſuperintendance and aſſiſtance from the firſt author.

THE Britons from a ſelf-ſufficiency, ignorance, or neglect, ſeem to conceive their government eſtabliſhed upon the firſt ſcheme; which

as

as it is a compoſition of the fallibility of man, cannot be perfect, and therefore impoſſible.

THE French, knowing what government is in its true nature, proceed on the ſecond way of diſpoſing things, ſuperintend and remedy approaching evils before they become enormous.

WHEN the people of this nation have once made a law, they imagine it will have its effect without putting it in motion, and are as careleſs about its execution, as if it had never been made at all; the evil proceeds, and no advantage is drawn from it.

AN irregularity which cannot be totally cured is not worth their attention, the leſſening inconveniencies is not an object of ſuch all-ſeeing miniſters; therefore becauſe licentious and immodeſt women will be found in every ſtate, no care ſhall be taken to diminiſh the miſchief which they may bring; inſtead of being confined to particular places and prevented from ſeducing intoxicated men and heedleſs boys, they are ſuffered

to patrole the ſtreets, and ſpread diſeaſe every where, to the ruin of families.

In Paris and Rome there are lewd women, but they appear not in the ſtreets; laws made in that country are obſerved, the people and the prince are the better for them.

Thro' the whole adminiſtration of this government, there runs a heedleſſneſs [illegible] eaſily to be accounted for; every [illegible] public place ſteals with impunity, and whoever thro' a deſign of ſerving his country ſhould diſcover frauds of this nature, will be received with contempt, and perhaps diſmiſſed if he has a place, whilſt the thief proceeds uninterrupted.

The kingdom of Ireland has reſented with juſtice the countenance which has been given to a perſon who had robbed the public, and the miniſter ſupports the deceiver againſt the parliament; this may be right in this country, but would be wrong in every other.

The inhabitants of that iſle are extremely loyal at preſent, and friends to the family

on

on the throne; but men angry with the ſervants, are very apt to tranſer it to the maſter who may ſupport them in their ill-deeds; at leaſt, Charles the firſt ſeems to have ruined himſelf by ſomething like that conduct. Men are not beings endowed with equity ſufficient to make ſuch nice diſtinctions, as may one day preſerve the lord, and execute the ſteward: miniſters therefore, who trifle with themſelves, [redacted] of their maſters.

THE reſpect which is paid to a nation, is chiefly in proportion to the underſtanding of the ruling powers, and not the money which it can raiſe alone; a domeſtic police well directed, a care of foreign affairs that beſpeaks attention and capacity in the miniſter, convey to other nations that ſpirit of good ſenſe, which will protect a people from inſults.

YET ſuch is the known relaxation of this true ſpirit of government, the very Portugueze treat this kingdom with contempt; and ſo little is the care in ſending fit governors to their plantations, that thoſe who have ſhewn no marks

of underſtanding in their own affairs, are ſent to direct thoſe of a people whom they know not.

By ſuch proceedings the colonies abroad are divided into feuds and ſeparate intereſts.

Beſides the weakneſs of thoſe at the helm, the Engliſh have nothing to fear but the French; and yet, this ſeems the only nation againſt which they are not guarded; their ſtanding troops are not ſufficient to repell an invaſion, the paſſage is ſo ſhort from one country to another, and may be made ſo quickly in a dark night with a favourable wind, ſo little to be interrupted by the naval powers, that it is amazing no proviſion of a militia is yet inſtituted to defend this country from attacks.

[redacted] battle in the favour of the enemy will decide the fate of London; what is to be expected from a people unuſed to the thoughts of an invaſion, and untrained to arms: yet, ſuch is the remiſſneſs of the adminiſtration, that the miniſter chooſes to rely on the few troops which this nation has in pay, rather than arm the natives in their own defence, and ſeems more inclined

clined that the French ſhall be their maſters, than that they ſhall owe the protection of themſelves and property to their own hands and virtue.

Is it a conſciouſneſs of miſbehaviour which reſtrains him from permitting the people to be their own defenders? or, is he afraid leſt being indulged with the power of protecting themſelves from foreign invaders, they may turn their arms on the domeſtic, and expell him from the preſence of his maſter?

It is in conducting a government, as in ſuſtaining a vaſt machine, the parts of the firſt as well as the latter muſt wear by action; and it is the prudence of a miniſter to ſupply thoſe deficiencies as they come on, and thus ſupport and continue without intermiſſion its motion and operation: this the French continually do, they repair every failing part, and add new ones to make it yet more perfect.

The Engliſh on the contrary, inattentively let the whole machine wear out, and then are at a loſs how to behave; having nothing pre-

pared, the whole work ſtands ſtill till the new parts are made, and thus, the benefit of its motion and effect is loſt for ſome time. Indeed the French reſemble the wiſe, and this nation the fooliſh virgins in ſcripture. Since the peace of Aix la Chapelle, the Engliſh have done no one thing in favour of their nation, unleſs that of reducing the intereſt of money may be thought ſo, and which I imagine in the end will prove the contrary.

THE French have preceeded on other principles, and preparing to ſtrengthen their colonies in America have built forts to ſupport them; not with deſign as is generally ſuggeſted of invading the Engliſh ſettlements at preſent, but to be in readineſs when a war ſhall be again declared between the two nations.

The colonies of Virginia and Maryland are the morſels which tempt the French appetite; the tobacco which they buy annually from the Engliſh, carries a great ſum from their nation in favour of the Britons; this they would prevent. If good authority may be relied on, the French ſcheme of going to the walls of Vienna is at an end, and thoſe of London will be their

next

next attempt. If they ſucceed, they know their intereſt too well to pretend the continuing in this iſland, the other powers of Europe will ſcarce permit it. Yet, after having created univerſal ruin and national bankruptcy, Virginia and Maryland may be gladly given to make peace, and procure their departure.

THIS every Engliſhman in the miniſterial train, tho' he ſaw his country invaded by a handful of Scotch highlanders, treats with infinite deriſion. Security, and ſelf-ſufficiency, have already ruin'd too many nations, and promiſes to be the bane of this.

AT this very moment they are raiſing ſubſidies for electors, whoſe ſituation cannot ſuffer them to be their friends; the true reaſon of which is unknown to the ſubject; only to pay the intereſt of money, borrowed from another elector, who is the richeſt of the whole Germanic body, which they cannot pay themſelves: Thus England is the bondſman of all the German courts, pays principal and intereſt, and breaks at laſt; buſied in making a king of the Romans, and inattentive to the ſtate of their co-

lonies; oppoſing the French power on the continent, where it cannot hurt them, and neglecting the defence of their own country, where it is ſo eaſily attack'd: believing nothing can offend it, till it happens; and then totally diſconcerted, thro' want of providing againſt it. Such is the policy and miniſterial conduct of this iſland at preſent, and ſuch it will continue in all appearance. Judge what will be the event of it. I am,

Your moſt obedient,

LET.

LETTER XV.

To the Reverend Father FRANCESCO SANSOVINO, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

THO' you have often heard of the various characters which inhabit this iſland, it is impoſſible to feign to yourſelf one half the oddities, which are to be found amongſt the inhabitants; checked neither by religion nor policy, each runs into extremes, and the ruling whim, or reigning paſſion, takes up all his time, and marks his whole behaviour. From this latitudinarian manner of thinking, there is greater variety of men of the ſame kind, than is to be found upon the globe: the men of pleaſure are all of the ſame ſtamp, in Italy and France; in this country there is ſome varying vein, which characterizes one from another: tho' the purſuit may be the ſame, yet the manner of taking and enjoying the game makes ſome difference in each of them.

In the law, phyſic, divinity, and trade, tho' there may be every where ſome original difference that decides to which each man belongs; yet there is ſome ſecondary diſtinction, which makes every man more original in this land, than is to be found in any other country.

To me, who have long reſided in this iſle, there ſtart out every day new characters, which I have never ſeen before. Not long ſince two diſputants in a coffee-houſe caught my attention; one ſuſtained with great humour the miſchief, which had been brought into the world by philoſophy and learning; the other how much theſe ſtudies added to the dignity of human nature: The firſt proteſted, that in his opinion there were but two uſeful books in the world, which were the bible and an almanac. Men, ſays he, cannot well do without knowing their religion and the day of the month; but as to all commentators and expoſitors of the ſcripture, they ſhould be committed to the flames. A religion once eſtabliſhed, ſhould be complied with; and the object of a nation's faith once ſettled, ſhould no more

more be examined than the right of the prince, to whom a man has once ſworn allegiance.

To what other purpoſe have all the learned theologiſts and philoſophers publiſhed their ſeveral ſentiments, but to diſturb the heads of others who read their works, and believe they underſtand them; the laſt have reaſon'd themſelves out of the truth of a ſmall underſtanding, into the errors of what they think a greater, and like dwarfs who undertake to carry the burthens of giants, ſink beneath the weight which becomes intolerable; they are aſhamed to ſhew their weakneſs, by acknowledging that the load is too heavy for them.

What advantage have all your writers on the ſcriptures brought to chriſtians, continued he; the ſpirit of diſpute has devour'd the ſpirit of religion, and we want another revelation to bring back the minds of men from the various ways of thinking, and ſects in chriſtianity, as much as that revelation was neceſſary to deſtroy all the futile and claſhing ſects of philoſophers amongſt the ancients.

Out of one plain truth they have produced a thouſand errors, all under the ſanction of infallible truth, and yet each of theſe truths is denied by the followers of the others: Thus, each ſect being avow'd as true by ſome, and falſe by others, it comes to paſs, that every ſect is at once both true and falſe; a rare concluſion on a matter of ſo much conſequence, as the religion of a nation. To theſe men of philoſophy we are indebted for this abſurdity; all which would have been avoided, but for theſe ſingular judgments, which differing from the vulgar, are called wiſe, and perhaps the leaſt intitled to it amongſt men.

I know, ſays he, that theſe wiſe heads and their followers aſſert, that the ancients permitted all opinions in their religion, and therefore had no diſputes about it; but this is a miſtake, the ancients of the ſame kingdom never differed about the genealogy or worſhip of their gods, nor attributed to one, what belonged to another; the worſhip of Jupiter was the ſame by all the Romans, and no one ever attempted an innovation; they never ſuffered it to be diſputed, whether a god, received

received as ſuch by the nation, was a god or not; or whether his temples ſhould ſtand eaſt and weſt, or north and ſouth; nor would the ſtate ſuffer a ſet of ſwivel-headed bigots or free-thinkers, to alter the worſhip of their deities, or change a national religion to pleaſe a few fanatic imaginations, perhaps of a cobler or tinker, whoſe impudence had thruſt them into the intermeddling with the affairs of a religion.

WHAT has Locke done to human underſtandings, but puzzle ten thouſand ſculls who would have gone to their graves undiſturbed but for him, and let looſe millions of tongues, to prate about what they have not the leaſt comprehenſion of.

SIR Iſaac Newton has made more coxcombs than all the dancing-maſters and mammas of London; every prig has him in his mouth, who never underſtood one of his problems, and nothing but demonſtration can convince theſe gentlemen, in things even where demonſtration is not to be obtained.

To me it ſeems neceſſary, that as in the affairs of gold and ſilver, there are officers eſtabliſhed to examine into the vaſes and other utenſils made of theſe metals, to ſee if they are genuine; ſo there ſhould be others, deſtin'd to inſpect and decide what underſtandings are proper to be truſted with ſuch authors, and not permit the moſt abſtruſe and difficult matters to fall into the hands of every pretender to thinking.

In my opinion, ſays he, the emperor, who burnt the library at Alexandria, was the greateſt friend to human kind; and if all the copies of Plato and Ariſtotle, as well as the other Greek and Latin writers, had been conſumed in it, we ſhould have had reaſon to bleſs the day, and paſs'd our hours in unanimity and peace. I am not ſure whether printing has not done as much miſchief as the plague.

For my part, ſays he, I would join in a petition to the legiſlature to burn all the books in the nation, except thoſe I firſt mentioned,

we ſhould have more eaſe, leſs diſſipation, warmer devotion, better ſenſe, and better times.

THUS he ended his converſation, which tho' mixt with much wildneſs, has yet much truth in it, and may partly ſerve to juſtify our reſtraining the bible from the hands of the weak and ill-judging. Adieu.

I am yours moſt affectionately.

LETTER XVI.

To the Reverend Father DOMINICO MANZONI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

NOTHING has leſs truth in it than what Voltaire and abbé le Bland have ſaid relating to the Quakers in this kingdom: it is evident plain from what the firſt has written, that he never was in their company, or did not attend to their cuſtoms. He deſcribes one of theſe gentry, with whom he dined, as taking off his hat, and aſking a benediction on his repaſt; in which he muſt be abſolutely miſtaken: it being the eſtabliſhed maxim of this ſect, never to perform that ceremony. It is the preſbyterian cuſtom indeed, to ſay a grace as long as the hundred-and-nineteenth Pſalm, before and after meals; but a quaker aſks no bleſſing from heaven before he eats, and has not gratitude enough to return thanks after he is fill'd. To ſay the truth: the church of England does both in a becoming manner, without that ridiculous and hypocritic length, and tone, which is to be found amongſt

amongſt the preſbyterians, anabaptiſts and independants.

If it was the ſpirit of religious enthuſiaſm which actuated the firſt Quakers; it is a ſpirit of another kind, which reigns amongſt them at preſent. If ſimplicity of dreſs, and ſimplicity of ſpeech, aroſe from the humble conſideration of human nature, in the beginning; it is the love of ſingularity, pride, and perſonal advantage, which has taken poſſeſſion of their hearts, and which continues their dreſs and manners at preſent.

Nothing on this globe has half the arrogance of a Quaker; he will accoſt the king with Friend George, the miniſter with Neighbour William, and this without the leaſt reluctance, diſtruſt of himſelf, or mark of confuſion. What can argue greater inſolence than this of meeting thoſe perſons, whoſe characters all the world agree to reverence, upon equal terms, and treating them with the utmoſt familiarity: the ſon of a Quaker has more aſſurance at ten years old, than the wildeſt officer of the king's guards at twenty five.

THEY call themſelves Chriſtians, but I know not what title they have to it; there is no ſacrament in uſe in their religion: in fact, they ſeem to be a ſet of fataliſts, who agree to call that cauſe which moves them to action, a ſomething proceeding from the ſpirit. I have heard it affirmed in their company, that the reſurrection of the body is not an article of their faith, if they have any at all.

As their number is but ſmall, ſo they draw advantage from that circumſtance, being all united in the general intereſt of the ſect. They are almoſt all in trade, and therefore once in the year they meet in ſeveral towns in England, to know the ſtate of thoſe parts of the country: to thoſe places of rendezvous one or more of the Quakers of the towns within two hundred miles always comes. At this time their real deſign of meeting is concealed, by praying and preaching; it is a religious act to the eye, but a political one at the heart; every Quaker who aſſembles brings the ſtate of the trade of that town from whence he comes along with him; the particular buſineſs

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of every grocer, mercer, and other tradeſman; his induſtry, manner of living, and expences: by this means the wholeſale dealers of London, Briſtol, and other great towns, are acquainted with the characters and buſineſs of all the tradeſmen in the kingdom: they know whether their buſineſs is ſuch as that they may be ſafely truſted with goods, if induſtry is obſerved in their affairs, and all other requiſites for thriving in trade.

THUS the Quakers in the leſſer towns and cities of England are ſpies on the actions of the inhabitants, and preſerve their ſect from loſſes in trade. And for this reaſon they endeavour to eſtabliſh a Quaker in every town, if there are none already, who may bring annual intelligence.

SINGULARITY to moſt peoples apprehenſion ſtands in the place of merit, a gimcrack in ſhell-philoſophy will lay out twenty guineas for a ſhell, which is ſingular, and without a fellow, tho' ugly and ill-ſhapen; at the ſame time he will not give a farthing for that which has the moſt elegant ſhape and greateſt diverſity of colours, if the ſpecies is numerous. Thus it is not beauty, but ſingularity which makes it eſteemed.

IT is the ſame thing amongſt men, a Quaker with his ſingularity of dreſs, behaviour, laconic ſtyle, and air of riches, the laſt of which he never fails to inſinuate to all his cuſtomers, catches the eyes of tradeſmen in the country; the apparent probity and power of ſelling cheap, becauſe ſuppoſed wealthy, create him buſineſs; men in the country are deſirous of talking with ſuch a man, and thus deal with him from that ſingularity in him, and that whimſical diſpoſition in themſelves.

THE Quakers are extremely punctual and honeſt in trifles, conſcious that men wear out their characters before they make their fortune, who proceed otherwiſe in trades where riches are gotten by degrees.

BUT, in matters of conſequence, the right of the thing is not the queſtion; the power of obtaining it by artifice is the only object to be conſidered; and, if a fortune can be made at once, there is little heſitation about the manner how.

IT is not a little ſurpriſing, that a ſet of men of ſuch principles as the Quakers profeſs, could be

be ſuffered to take root in any nation; they have covered all the political maxims which they adopt, by the veil of religion. Accordingly, in the rebellion which happened laſt in England, they openly avowed that their principles would not allow them to oppoſe it. This was nothing to be remarked in a Quaker: yet a man of the eſtabliſhed church would have been ſtigmatized for a Jacobite, that had ſaid any thing like this.

THEIR religion, it ſeems, will not ſuffer them to bear arms. What can be more ridiculous than this principle, to a man who knows human nature, except the people who indulge them in this humour?

WHAT right have any ſet of men to the protection of a government in times of peace, who will not aſſiſt with every power they poſſeſs to defend their country in times of war? their taxes are not greater than other peoples.

ARE the catholics more ridiculous in indulging monks amongſt them without contributing to ſave their country by arms, than the Britons in permitting a ſect amongſt themſelves, who

openly avow that their religion will not ſuffer them to defend their country?

ANOTHER indulgence their obſtinacy has procured them is this; they are ſuffered to affirm before a magiſtrate that which all other ſubjects of this crown are obliged to depoſe upon oath on the Evangeliſts. In order to obſerve the effect of this ſufferance, I have frequently attended trials where theſe people have been witneſſes, and thro' the whole of my obſervation I have never found them give an explicit anſwer when it could make againſt their friends; nay, the whole chicanery and ſearch of the council could not draw an anſwer which was not filled with ambiguities.

THEIR cauſe of demanding this privilege is the moſt convincing reaſon for its not being allowed them; it is evident they imagine that there is ſomething more obligatory, ſacred and binding in an oath, than in an affirmation: therefore ſince all the individuals of a nation ought to be under the ſame influence and apprehenſion in the adminiſtration of an oath, it was extremely ill underſtood to grant this liberty of affirmation to

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any ſet of men whatever. It is a road that leads to injuſtice; it is injuſtice itſelf, that one man ſhould be ſubjected to the terrors of eternal puniſhment, for the breach of that which another only conceives as ſomething of a common nature.

THAT the legiſlature and the Quakers themſelves conceive an affirmation to be of an inferior obligation on the perſon who takes it, to that of an oath, is certain: no man, whatever crime he is guilty of, can be executed on the affirmation of a Quaker; and no Quaker has refuſed taking his oath to the execution of one that has rouſed his righteous ſpirit, by robbing him. Thus the legiſlature thinks it an indulgence, and not equally obligatory, by making this difference in caſes of life and death.

THE Quaker who takes the common oaths of the country, in caſes of being robbed, cannot at other times plead conſcience againſt it with juſtice; becauſe either his conſcience admits of doing what it knows to be wrong on theſe occaſions, or he ſcreens himſelf from what he thinks to be

right in others, and has no real exception againſt.

FOR theſe reaſons if he is ſuffered to take his affirmation in caſes of property, he ſhould not be indulged to take his oath in thoſe of life and death. He ought to adhere to his conſcience throughout, and not change the nature of the obligation as his intereſt and inclination permit him. In truth, it is a weakneſs to excuſe a ſet of men from oaths in thoſe inſtances, where all others of the kingdom are obliged to take them.

SUCH are the Quakers: I leave you to decide if they are that ſimple primitive people which Voltaire and abbé le Bland have told you; have not they found means to obtain advantages which favour of refined cunning, and ſecure themſelves in ſafety whilſt the nation is fighting their battles?

THE celebrated ſyſtem of Penn, which has been ſo much praiſed and for ſo little reaſon, is abſolutely impracticable amongſt men: indeed it is eaſy to preſerve peace with the Indians, who are purchaſed by ſmall preſents to continue it; but can they buy off the French, who are pre-

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paring to increaſe their dominions in America? will the ſpirit of meekneſs ſerve them in that caſe? and what has been ſaid with reſpect to their indulging all religions amongſt them, is not true, the catholics are excepted; and the ill effects of a general naturalization is ſenſibly felt amongſt them, the Germans being at preſent ſo numerous that they preſerve their language and intereſt ſeparate, which is no ſmall inconveniency to the country; and would as probably live under a French, as an Engliſh government.

THUS, ſir, you ſee this applauded ſyſtem of government in England and that in America is ſtained with as deep blots as thoſe of other nations: it is ideally better, but in execution as bad as that of France, whoſe inhabitants are complimented with the name of ſlaves in this country.

I am yours moſt affectionately.

LETTER XVII.

To the Reverend Father ANTONIO COCCHI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IT is impoſſible to ſay what may happen in this kingdom by the effect of time; but at preſent there is no probability of the catholic faith increaſing amongſt the Engliſh.

ALL public meetings but thoſe at the ambaſſadors chapels are forbidden by law, the prieſts of our religion are not permitted to preach amongſt the people, and thoſe of an enthuſiaſtic nature are all ſeized by the preachers of new ſects, who harangue the multitude in fields and particular places deſtin'd for that end.

IT ſeems difficult to propagate any mode of religion amongſt people who are at eaſe; thoſe who feel no worldly evils are little ſolicited to enquire into matters of religion, they are in opulence in this world, and undiſturbed about the conſequences of the other; for that reaſon there

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are none but the poorer ſort, whoſe diſtreſſes prompt them to follow thoſe new preachers, who are extremely liberal in promiſes of rewards in heaven to thoſe who join in their worſhip upon earth. A ſoothing conſolation to the feelings of poverty!

WHAT a general calamity might effectuate, I know not; probably, as thoſe who have no religion are the moſt apt to run into the oppoſite extreme in theſe ſituations, the catholic faith, anſwering fully to the diſpoſitions of ſuch times, might be re-eſtabliſhed in England. At preſent I cannot avoid thinking, that this nation is of all others the leaſt advantaged by the religion which is to be found in it; the heads of thoſe who were originally deſigned to ſuperintend theſe affairs, are either extremely weak or extravagantly negligent.

THE men in power, remiſs in all things, leave this enthuſiaſtic ſpirit of the field-preachers unconverted to any uſe, unleſs they ſuppoſe the weakening the eſtabliſhed church an advantage; whereas it is capable of being turned to great national ſervice, if they treated them as we do

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thoſe of our religious orders, whoſe ſouls are on fire with zeal to bring their bodies to ſuffer for religion and the ſervice of our church.

WERE they ſent to convert the Indians in America to the chriſtian faith, they would unite theſe nations more ſtrongly to the Engliſh intereſt than every other power on earth; he who rules the ſoul, rules every thing; otherwiſe the French will prevail throughout the continent, whoſe prieſts are labouring to convert the American nations to their faith, and conſequently to their party.

THIS being encouraged in the manner I mention, the kingdom of England would draw as much advantage from their enthuſiaſm in America, as it brings miſchief at preſent in this iſland.

INDEED the diſbelief of all futurity is ſo univerſally prevalent in this country, the men in power are altogether inattentive or ignorant what effect religion can have amongſt an uncivilized and barbarous race; the ſhort and only way they know of coming at things, is buying. This, tho' it ſucceeds in perfection amongſt the na-

tives, is not ſure of ſucceſs in other countries; and thoſe who can prevail over the mind by objects of religion, and influence by money alſo, are almoſt ſure of prevailing in the end. The French neither neglect one or the other method.

MAY not the reaſon of this ignorance in human nature be owing to this? The human heart is not ſo well known in this nation as in catholic countries; men judge of others by what they feel alone, and no man is various enough to found a knowledge of all mankind on what paſſes in himſelf only. Thus the man in power, directing all things from his peculiar ſenſations, knows little of all human nature.

IN nations where the catholic religion prevails, the clergy, accuſtomed to attend to the various diſpoſitions of men, by the confeſſions of very different tempers in head and heart, know the map of man, the ſhoals, creeks, bays, tides, and currents of human nature, better than thoſe who are not acquainted with any boſom but their own: they diſcern what incites, and what reſtrains.

THEY are ſenſible how eaſily man is conducted by his ruling paſſion, and therefore guide it to their intentions by that way, and not break down their minds into compliance with what they pleaſe to have done, by dint of money only; by this means even the doing juſtly thro' a ſiniſter influence has a vicious effect, the mind even ſuffers a kind of corruption in being purchaſed to do right.

THUS this effectual machine of zeal for the cauſe of God, through want of knowledge or inattention, is ſuffered to do miſchief in this nation; which, ſent into their colonies, would be productive of infinite utility. No nation knows ſo little how to turn the various diſpoſitions of the heart to advantage, as the Engliſh.

NO nation has more criminals condemned for violating the laws of the land than this; hundreds are tranſported to the plantations every year; from whence many return, and are hanged; others are ſervants for a certain time only.

This brings but little advantage to the colonies; whereas, if they had encouragement given them to marry Indian women, if it made part of the judgment paſs'd on them, or the women were obliged to marry Indian men, there would then be a ſtronger alliance between theſe American nations and the Engliſh. Some ſmall ſums of money might be given on this account.

The French practiſe the encouraging intermarriages between the neighbouring Indians and their people; and by this, and by their zeal for making converts, they increaſe greatly in intereſt amongſt the Indian nations of America.

If theſe obſervations be true, which I have received from father B—— in that country, it ſeems evident that riches and irreligion bring ſloth and ignorance in the knowledge of the human head and heart. The great ſchool for the ſcience of which, is at that city where you reſide; where men are better known and underſtood, and the different diſpoſitions better applied, than any where on earth; from the zealot who

who believes, burns, and dies a martyr on the fiery ſands of Africa, to him who manages a nation's intereſt in the conclave. Adieu: love me, as I do you.

Your's moſt affectionately.

LETTER XVIII.

To the Reverend Father ALESSANDRO ADIMARI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

HOW many things are received for certain truths by the different people of Europe, which are really without any foundation. This variety of opinions ſeems to me to ariſe from ſhortſightedneſs, or drawing paralells between kingdoms; whereas no two things in political affairs ſeem to be enough alike to deduce any reaſonable conſequence from the ſimilarity. If you aſk an Engliſhman, what has made arts, letters, and trade, flouriſh in the different parts of the world? he will immediately anſwer, Liberty: the Athenians were a free people; behold what prodigies the city of Athens produced; the Romans alſo; what did that illuſtrious people produce in arms, and literature! ſays he in rapture.

In commerce, in like manner, free ſtates alone, were thoſe who ſucceeded. The Tyrians, Carthaginians, Syracuſans, and Marſeillians; the Genoeſe and Venetians; the Dutch and Britons; what a figure have they made in the world! They have cover'd the ocean with their fleets, and brought immenſe riches to the inhabitants: The laſt of which, has not only mix'd the knowledge of trade with war, but even philoſophy and ſcience; thus it is liberty alone, which can give birth to the ſuperior arts, ſuperior philoſophy, and learning.

If we ſhould grant this to be true, theſe aſſertors of this cauſe of learning and commerce will fall into a wilderneſs, difficult enough to find a path which leads from it, to ſafety; if we ſhould deny it, there would be no leſs pain to prove the truth of this aſſertion.

If painting and ſtatuary be the works of genius, even catholic Rome has no ſmall reaſon to boaſt of its productions in that taſte; was that city then free at the times when Raphael, Michel

Michel Angelo, and other great men, painted and carved in it? If it was at that time, it is the ſame at preſent; the ſyſtem of government being changed in no reſpect; this will ſcarce be allow'd, I fanſy.

No man will deny, that the French have produced men of genius in all kinds of literature; and yet, no Engliſhman will allow that they are a free people; how comes it to paſs, that liberty can only promote works of genius, ſince the French a nation of ſlaves, has been prolifick in thoſe productions?

PERHAPS, in ſtrict truth, even Rome and Athens were declining from the ſummit of liberty at the times of their greateſt men in literary genius. If Socrates, Plato, and Xenophon, like fruit ripeſt juſt before its falling from the tree, lived in the autumn of liberty; Demoſthenes, Ariſtotle, and others, can ſcarce be imagined to have paſt their lives in that ſtate; or be eſteem'd free in the days of Philip and Alexander: And ſurely Livy, Horace, Virgil, Tully, and many others

wrote in that time when liberty was no longer at Rome; to ſay nothing of Lucan, Tacitus, Seneca, Juvenal, and many others, who lived in the days of avow'd tyranny.

EVEN the greateſt geniuſes of this nation cannot with ſtrict propriety be ſaid to have lived in times when England enjoy'd its greateſt freedom. The glory of England was great in the reign of Elizabeth, but the liberty was nothing in the compariſon of what it has ſince known; ſurely her father's reign was not remarkable for the freedom of his ſubjects; and yet, Sir Thomas More lived in the days of Henry the eighth, whoſe little book of the Utopia has more genius in it than all thoſe that have been written in that way.

SHAKESPEAR and Spencer wrote in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and no men have ſhewn more genius in poetry than theſe two. Sir Walther Rawleigh, and my lord Verulam, in like manner, were far from feeling the warmeſt beams of liberty, and yet they are undoubtedly men of genius, particularly the latter,

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who probably excell'd all men in that greateſt diſtinction of genius, intuitive perception.

THUS it ſeems, that liberty is neither the cauſe of literature, nor genius; if it were, greater liberty would have produced greater proofs of each kind. Whereas this nation has declined in genius in many parts, ſince it has increaſed in liberty: it would be difficult to find a man of very exalted underſtanding in the nation at preſent, and yet no Engliſhman will allow he is not free.

THUS it is not liberty which creates genius and literature in a nation; it muſt then be look'd for from ſome other cauſe.

THE firſt of theſe no human power, nor ſtate, can create; it ſeems to be, amongſt human kind, what a comet is amongſt the heavenly bodies, a being, bound to no one government, that comes with ſuperior intellects, to enlighten the underſtanding of this world at various times; as the other may, to repleniſh the orbs of this ſyſtem with light, or ſome other qualities unknown to us.

THAT encouragement has not produced genius, is alſo as evidently true; ſince all who have ever received any advantage from ſuperior parts, have diſtinguiſh'd themſelves before they were rewarded; and many a man of great capacity has languiſh'd in obſcurity and penury his whole life; even thoſe, whoſe writings had convinced the world, that the men had merit who wrote them. It is not encouragement then which has produced the talents of thoſe who are ſo juſtly admired.

FROM theſe conſiderations perhaps it ariſes, that the Engliſh have appointed no ſtated proviſion, as an encouragement for men of ſuperior genius in the polite parts of literature and ſcience: The divine and lawyer are amply taken care of indeed; but the phyſician, mathematician, and others in other ſtudies, have neither honors nor profits, annex'd to them, for being ſingularly eminent.

THE Engliſh tell you, that a genius will ſhew itſelf; and for this reaſon it is preſumed, they conclude that the beſt of thoſe capacities, which

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are amongſt the common run of mankind, are to be neglected.

EVERY nation ſhould have academies, with honor and penſions annex'd to the members of them, to call out the beſt exertion of thoſe talents or degree of underſtanding, which every man poſſeſſes.

THIS, tho' it cannot make genius, will make ſomething very near it; it will make the intellects of thoſe who apply, more ſtrong and ready in their ſtudies, than thoſe who have no incentive, but what may caſually reſult from their labours. The mind of a ſtudent ſhould neither be in great affluence, or in great anxiety; the firſt will create ſloth, the other emaciate the powers of thinking, by the pain which it communicates to the ſoul.

WITHOUT theſe encouragements to study, the character of a nation will decline, and the powers alſo. Genius comes too rarely to ſupport the authority of a learned people; it is therefore the buſineſs of a miniſter, to inſtitute ſocieties of that kind, where men ſhall be urged by honor and intereſt, to the diſcovery

of things uſeful to the community, and preſerve a nation as well as the nature of things will permit, in the rank it has acquired.

THIS the French have already done, and their academies have had the good effect of ſuſtaining knowledge, and producing men who are of public utility to arts, ſciences, trades, and manufactures. The honor of being a member of the academy of ſcience firſt draws men of ſtudy to offer their obſervations and diſcoveries; which, if approved of, introduce them by degrees to be choſen members: where, after farther proofs of their abilities, they become penſioners, and are at eaſe enough to proceed leiſurely in their ſtudies during life.

THE great buſineſs of a nation is, to convert the common talents of men to the greateſt poſſible advantages, not waiting the arrival of genius; which, like the Meſſiah to the Jews, may never come; which if it ſhould arrive, is to be conſider'd as ſomething above expectation, and applied accordingly to their farther utility.

THIS the French know and purſue; the Engliſh, on the contrary, deſpiſe, are ignorant of,

of, or neglect; hence it muſt inconteſtably follow, that ſooner or later France muſt gain the aſcendant over all thoſe who are remiſs in theſe affairs. The ſpirit of invention is greatly promoted amongſt all ranks of people in France, every common mechanic is rewarded with ſome gratuity, proportion'd to its utility; and the miniſter will read a memorial of any thing propoſed as an advantage, without rejecting it with the ignominy of a project, and projector, even if it come from the hands of the meaneſt artizan or labourer; and, if it offer any thing that is probable to be carried into execution, reward him for the hint.

If commerce has not hitherto advanced much amongſt any ſtates but thoſe which are free, it is not becauſe a monarchic government is not fit for the ſupport and encouragement of trade; but becauſe monarchs having hitherto eſteemed trade as ſomething below their attention, and neglected to turn their eyes that way, conqueſt has been the purſuit of kings, glory in arms their chief object, till England and Holland growing great by trade, have ſhewn them, that there are other ways of aggrandizing

grandizing a nation, than that of extending their dominions.

IN conſequence of this, the French trade has proved a formidable rival to that of England; and by determining the view of their meaſures on this object, wean'd them from the viſion of univerſal monarchy, and enrich'd their nation.

THE monarch, who determines to take the care of commerce under his protection, has it in his power to promote it beyond that which can be expected from a free ſtate. Good laws may be defeated by claſhing intereſts in popular aſſemblies, each ſet of tradeſmen oppoſing the increaſe of trades different from their own; perhaps the nature of a free ſtate will ſcarce permit that rigour of enquiry which is neceſſary to keep men from committing frauds in the manufactures which they are engaged in.

THE inſpection of the French manufactories in every reſpect is ſo order'd, that no frauds can be committed; the miniſter knows the nature and purſuit of commercial men is to enrich

rich themſelves: this deſire being entirely ſelfiſh, is but little apt to conſider poſterity, or be ſtrictly honeſt. For theſe reaſons, thoſe propenſities are check'd by public inſpection: a trade once begun with a foreign kingdom is almoſt certain of being eſtabliſh'd, the merchandize being ſure of continuing the ſame; the foreign merchant knows this, and depends upon it.

WHEREAS the mechanics and manufacturers of England, having no ſuperintendancy over their productions, goaded on by the deſire of ſudden gain, have full licence of deceiving: For this reaſon they have loſt their trades in ſome branches, and muſt in more, whilſt they are curſing the French, for robbing them of that which they loſe by their own diſhoneſty.

IN free countries it is difficult to preſerve that ſubordination, which is neceſſary to ſupport commerce in its greateſt perfection: the encouragement of advantageous ſchemes, and prohibition of bad practices, are never well underſtood, are always tedious in execution, and the laws made in conſequence of one or the other ill plan'd or imperfect.

EITHER

EITHER of theſe deſigns a monarch accompliſhes by a ſingle ordinance; the firſt ſhall be encouraged, the latter ſhall be deſtroyed; and the people, accuſtomed to conſider things with a dependancy on their ſovereign, are contented with their ſtate, live more frugally and happy than any where elſe, and acquieſce with what is right.

IT ſeems to me therefore, that a monarchic ſtate is the moſt proper for the advancement of commerce, and will at laſt (finding the advantage, which accrues from it) prevail over all other kinds of government. It is probable that a king will liſten to the public good, beyond that of particular companies; but miniſters will protect thoſe companies, in oppoſition to the public good, if theſe can protect them from their maſter's and the peoples reſentments.

THE conſideration of what luxury effects in a nation, comes under this head of commerce alſo. In France, the Eaſt-India commodities, which are bought for ſterling money, are ſold again for ſterling money, and the nation is a gainer;

er; England, on the contrary, ſending out money, ſees no return for the greateſt part which it conſumes at home; even the ſugar colonies, only ſupply the people with luxury; they work a whole year, ſwallow their manufactories down their throats, and draw little advantage to themſelves by exportation; the French making their luxury conſiſt in elegance, and conſuming their own productions, export great quantities of eaſtern and weſtern goods to be run into England, exported to Hamborough, and other parts of Germany; and thus convert their foreign product to domeſtic utility.

It is the part of a great miniſter, to remedy theſe inconveniencies, which are growing in this kingdom where I am; but there is yet no St. John, in this deſert of politics, arrived to prepare the way, and foretell the coming, of this temporal ſaviour, ſo much wanted in this nation. Adieu, believe me

Yours moſt affectionately.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

To the Counteſs of **** *at* Rome.

Madam,

YOUR enquiry in relation to the amours and galiantries of the Engliſh, will afford me no very romantic ſubject of diſplaying the various revolutions of the heart, which take place in the loves of the Italians; the French have much more of the ſentimental in their general nature, than the Engliſh; their gallantries are conducted with more decency, and more time is paſt together between the amorous pair, than in England.

IN general, it is the extinction of deſire which is the object of every Engliſhman's purſuit; yet, when they do love ſincerely, no beings upon earth are ſo totally devoted to their paſſion as the natives of this iſle; they hang, drown, and ſhoot themſelves, if diſappointed in their loves; nothing is reſtraint enough on their inclinations: men of the higheſt rank marry women of even infamy,

infamy, not to ſay of extreme low birth; and ladies of noble families wed their footmen, players and ſingers; that univerſal manner of breeding children to ſcarce any reſtraint, that ſpirit which is ill underſtood for liberty, indulging them to think that all actions which are not directly criminal, are not culpable. This, tho' it will appear extremely ſtrange to your apprehenſions, is not conſidered ſo here; many women who have been public proſtitutes, have figured at court with titles, by this accident of marriage.

I AM apt to believe, that few beings in any nation are truly actuated by the real ſenſation of love; the deſign of meeting in the ſexes, being very well anſwered by an inferior degree of, perhaps, a quite different paſſion.

IN England it is conſidered as unmanly and effeminate to dangle after a woman, to prevail by ſighs, tender ſpeeches, long ſufferings, and perſeverance; to take a heart like a citadel is a thing unknown amongſt them: the moſt decent Engliſhman therefore, in ſearch of a miſtreſs, applies where he is moſt probable of ſucceſs,

amongſt

amongſt the meaner claſs of women, who are extremely beautiful in this nation, and making a compliment of his money, which he and ſhe prefer to bleeding hearts and all amorous acknowledgements, obtains his deſires.

FOR theſe reaſons the power of women is infinitely leſs here, than in Italy or France.

IN the public gardens, at plays, operas, and aſſemblies, here is no chichiſbe, nor amant as in Italy and France, who ſighs, grins, ogles, fetches and carries like a well educated ſpaniel.

AS man, madam, is a creature which is extremely fond of power, ought I not to glory in this freedom which an Engliſhman preſerves, in thus keeping independant of the thraldom of beauty, and its ſervice, which is ſometimes very ſeverely exacted?

YET, ſuch is the ſenſation of true love, that I would renounce all other enjoyments on earth to poſſeſs the object, and feel that thrilling paſſion which I once knew; to ſee the emanations of reciprocal delight darting from the eyes of her

her whom I adored; our whole ſouls correſponding to each other's touch, like ſtrings in uniſon; for ſurely ſouls have power of touching each other; the joy of being ever with her, and ſhe impatient of my abſence, whether in the moment of exalted rapture, or in the chilling hour which generally ſucceeds, alike ardently deſiring to be conſubſtantiated with her.

THIS, in ſpite of vows and prayers poſſeſſed my ſoul entirely; this you knew and indulged the weakneſs for the ſake of the perfection in the object; this rapture you will yet indulge; alas! diſtance has not yet reclaimed my heart; one thought of love and woman, brings her back in full power upon my boſom, and I am dejected whole hours after it.

AS there is an indelicacy in the men of England, and as their paſſions are not of the moſt refined ſort, I do not wonder that they indulge themſelves with taking girls from the lower claſſes, which are extremely beautiful, provided they had yet been unpolluted; but ſuch is the indelicate taſte of many of the nobility and gentry of this nation, they keep expenſively women as well

known, and as much hackney'd as the Appian way in Italy; this is ſuch a taſte as ſeems not to be accounted for; they are mere hounds in their appetites, and prefer carrion to the moſt exquiſite delicacies of the table.

I HAVE been often led to imagine, that the ſultans of the eaſt, are actuated by more delicate emotions than the northern nations; it cannot be the mere deſire between the ſexes, which can thus ſeclude them from the converſation of the world in company with women, it muſt certainly be that refined ſenſation which I yet feel; perhaps, even more exalted and refined by the warmer ſuns, and the temperament which reigns amongſt that people.

IF it be that joy, how ill-judging is human nature, that, unconſcious of the tranſport, condemns this ſlothful and unambitious life, as much to be preferred to thoſe tumultous joys of men in full liberty, as all that has been imagined of angelic natures and their enjoyments, is ſuperior to thoſe of the moſt debaſed of the human kind.

THE

THE recalling what I would ever wiſh to forget, has diſabled me from purſuing my account of the Engliſh ladies; I feel ſomething at my heart which ſo enfeebles me, that I cannot proceed; alas! after ſo many years of abſence, I am obliged to ſigh and weep myſelf into tranquillity. I am,

Your moſt obedient
and moſt humble ſervant.

LETTER XX.

*To the Marchioneſs of ***** at Rome.*

Dear Madam,

THAT women have ſeparate delights from thoſe of a huſband's company, is nothing ſurpriſing to an Italian; but that there ſhould be ſo little converſation between men and their wives when they are not diſagreeable to each other, is ſomewhat ſingular. It is no uncommon thing in London, perhaps it is the moſt common, for a couple to live together on very good terms, who have not the leaſt real love for each other; if their condition of life ſupplies them with money enough, each purſues their ſeparate pleaſures; he paſſes his evening at the tavern in wine, and ſmoaking tobacco, ſhe drinks her afternoon's tea in chatting with her neighbour about her huſband's buſineſs, her new cloaths, or any curſory tittle-tattle of the day.

AT night they tumble into one bed together, he drenched in wine, and ſtinking of to-

bacco, ſhe careleſs of this violation of decency, till next morning, when each wakes to their daily employments, and the day goes on like every other: if this prevailed only amongſt thoſe of the loweſt order of human creatures, the ſurprize would be nothing; but citizens of great wealth, and gentlemen of great eſtates, paſs their lives in this filthy manner; a wife who ſhould have delicacy enough to leave her huſband's bed on this account, would be conſidered as a woman of a vicious diſpoſition, and be treated ſomething like a proſtitute perhaps; thus there is no kind of delicacy on either ſide, as they came together for ſome worldly advantage, ſo when either dies, the ſurvivor makes a handſome funeral, and looks out for another partner.

THE widow, if ſhe has the good fortune to outlive the good-man, wears her weeds a whole year, and ſighs heavily every hour after a new huſband; ſo indelicate are the women of this country, even thoſe that are ſtill thought modeſt, they never reſtrain themſelves to any number of huſbands, and meet one with as much indifference, or joy, as they met the other, even to half a dozen.

THIS kind of behaviour is not to be found in Italy; women who marry men for their conveniency, ſeldom bear their company with good temper, tho' diveſted of all theſe diſpleaſing ſenſations which accompany wine and tobacco; and in France one bed never contains ſuch a pair; ſhe that has loſt the man ſhe loves, is never indifferent, much leſs happy, with another after the firſt is no more.

PRAY Madam, tell me, you who know the human heart better than any philoſopher I have read, or been acquainted with, is this want of delicacy in theſe people a real loſs of happineſs, or is it not?

FOR my own part, I am convinced, that in this kingdom it is not, as far as my obſervation can extend.

HUMAN ſouls of a ſuperior nature, like the moſt elegant and beſt formed inſtruments, are eaſier put out of tune, than thoſe of a coarſe fabric; a duſt, lying on a particular part, ſhall impair the ſound of one; and a trifle diſturb the

repoſe of the other; a rainy day untunes both: tho' the harmony of the inſtrument is moſt exquiſite, and the delights of the mind ineffable, yet conſidering how many diſagreeable accidents are probable to arrive, which may diſcompoſe one and the other, is it not better to be formed of leſs delicate materials, and, tho' wanting the the higheſt excellence in ſound or ſenſation, to poſſeſs a common fiddle, or a common ſoul?

To carry on the alluſion; if we could always play ſolos, happineſs might be obtained by thoſe of refined taſtes; but as ſociety is almoſt neceſſary to our natures, and each ſex thinks itſelf unhappy to a certain degree, till united with the other, as greater pieces of muſic compoſed of many parts, are neceſſary to ſhew all the powers of harmony; ſo perhaps, the probability of meeting with correſponding tempers and according tones makes it better to have leſs delicate ſenſations, and being leſs pleaſed with one another, feel no miſery from jarring diſpoſitions.

The ladies of the beſt quality are indeed relieved from this cruel manner, which prevailed

not long ſince, amongſt the nobility even, when drinking and ſmoaking were more the cuſtom than at preſent: notwithſtanding this change, and that the ladies are more in company with men than uſual; yet, they have not all the ſweetneſs of temper, which ſo truly characterizes a woman. That freedom which French education gives the females of Paris, ſo artful in fact, and yet ſo artleſs in appearance, is not yet arrived in this capital, but in few families; like the firſt flight of woodcocks but here and there one, which, like all ſcarce things, are much valued and difficultly met with.

GALLANTRY in England is not underſtood, and complaiſance to the opinion of women has not yet prevailed enough to make their opinions in literature faſhionable; it is not that their underſtandings are not as good as in any part of Europe, but the ladies themſelves have not yet taken upon them to determine in works of literature, and writers think themſelves above being criticiſed by female remarks.

IN this they are wrong, in my opinion; I would rather take your judgment in matters of polite

polite writing, than the firſt wit's of Italy, and ſhould think myſelf ſafer in your approbation, than in that of a long liſt of literati, whom I could mention. Women have in general more delicate ſenſations than men; what touches them is, for the moſt part, true in nature; whereas men, warpt by education, judge amiſs from previous prejudice, and referring all things to the model of the ancients, condemn that by compariſon, where no true ſimilitude ought to be expected.

I WISH ſincerely you could travel to this kingdom, and ſpeak this language: how proud ſhould I be to ſee you preſide at your aſſembly of men of letters, ſoothing the Engliſh to politeneſs by your preſiding genius, and letting them ſee what advantage one polite woman would bring to all their literary productions.

I AM ſtill flattering myſelf, the day will come, when women will have the aſcendant, and take to their protection the languiſhing arts, and expiring letters. Tho' I am not a native of this land, yet I own long reſidence amongſt the

the inhabitants, and the fame they have juſtly merited in learning, makes me wiſh that ſome auſpicious hour would arrive, and retrieve the declining ſtate of literature. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LETTER XXI

To the Reverend Father BATISTA GUARINI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

WE have it from more than human authority, that a prophet has no honour in his own country; in like manner, to keep the character of a people in its fulleſt luſtre, it ſhould never be ſeen. A nation reputed for learning and philoſophy, when we read at a diſtance the authors it has produced, fills us with admiration; we forget to imagine, that every one in it is not a man of letters and ſcience, and entertain conceptions which are much above nature; yet, when it comes to be beheld, we ſoon find our miſtake: a whole people, like an individual, loſes admiration by acquaintance.

To you, who live on the other ſide of the Alps, who ſtudy Newton, and adore him, all England appears fill'd with ſuch geniuſes.

But

But what will you ſay, when I tell you, that the reigning philoſophy at preſent, is, collecting natural curioſities, foſſils, ſhells, and petrefactions of all kinds; and mathematics much neglected. It is much eaſier to remember all the different kinds of natural productions, than to ſolve a problem in the abſtruſe mathematics; for one, who can perform the latter, there are thouſands, who are equal to the firſt. Whoever has memory enough to retain the names, and patience ſufficient to gaze till he knows one production from another, is an adept in that philoſophy. Thus, the number is increaſed, and the value leſſened.

You would be amazed to ſee how degenerate this nation is become! can you conceive, that in the land where Bacon and Newton were born, there ſhould not be one extenſive genius, or one conſiderable mathematician. The academy of ſcience at Paris, at preſent, has much greater men in that ſtudy, than are to be found here: Clairaut and d'Alembert are ſuperior to Simſon, who is almoſt the only one which belongs to the royal ſociety.

Indeed,

Indeed, to the honour of England, here is one nobleman, who is by much the greateſt mathematician in the world, amongſt men of high rank; it is my lord Stanhope.

AT the meetings of theſe philoſophers, gazing with raptures at a cockle-ſhell of a new kind, admiring the aptitude with which each animal is fitted to his deſtination in nature, wondering at the humming-bird and his neſt, built with ſo much art, and inſtinct; I have beheld them with the utmoſt contempt, conſcious that their intellects were not ſtrong enough to ſee the fitneſs of religion to human kind.

THESE wondrous philoſophers, who extoll the ſupreme intelligence ſo highly in the ſtructure and diſpoſition of a fly, ſmile at the word miracle; and, from mere poverty of genius, conceive that to be falſe which is unintelligible to their limited capacities. When, alas! the wings of that inſect are not more adapted to the uſe of flying, than miracles are to faith in man; and as inſeparable from his well-being, and his nature.

THERE is a certain kind of capacity, which is not exalted enough to ſee that human nature is imperfect in all its reſearches, nor humble enough to acknowledge its incapacity, which is deſtructive to itſelf, and intolerable to men of great underſtanding; prompt to examine all things, and capable of comprehending none, as it ought; it begets an arrogance in full health, which terminates in uneaſineſs in old age; ſuch is that of the philoſophers of this preſent hour in Great Britain.

IF you mention the attributes of the deity, each of them ſhall deſcant an hour on his infinite wiſdom, juſtice, and benevolence; and if you name the chriſtian religion, they will give you to underſtand, they do not believe one word of it to be true: How incompatible with the former part of their converſation is this laſt declaration? How ſhort-ſighted is this pretenſion to philoſophy? Infinite wiſdom, juſtice, and benevolence, have ſuffered mankind to be govern'd ſeventeen hundred and fifty years by a rule and guide, which has not a word of truth in it.

THIS

THIS is either making their deity impotent, or regardleſs of the welfare of his creatures (neither of which can be deduced from their principles) and deſtroys his attributes.

IS there one man amongſt them, who has yet aſſign'd from what cauſe one part of his favourite ſhell is white, the other purple; he muſt tell you, nature made it, and the eye ſees it ſo; it is taken off intuitively. If he ſhould aſk a believer, why he gives credit to miracles? He would anſwer: God ordain'd them, and his faith was convinced of the truth of them: At this the philoſopher would laugh, and yet the humbler man of faith has all to urge in his favour, that this mighty man of reaſon can plead for himſelf; the one tells you the colours are ſo to his eye; the other, that the tranſactions are ſo to his faith, and all the reaſoning on earth upon either of them would be exactly equal; neither of them being able to explain, how the ſhell became purple and white, nor how water became wine. One has the evidence of ſenſe to convince him, and the other the evidence of faith to convince him; and the world acquieſce

acquieſce alike in both, where nature has been uncorrupted by falſe philoſophy, and deluſive pretenſions to thinking and reſearch.

METHINKS there is nothing ſo truly great in the character of Socrates, as deſpiſing all knowledge which did not tend to the ſtudy and diſcovery of human nature: even the ſublimer parts of philoſophy, the inquiry into the motions, connections, and dependances of the heavenly bodies, which require genius and application, are infinitely inferiour to that of the ſtudying man. What would that divine philoſopher have ſaid of thoſe, whoſe whole purſuit is amaſſing together the ſcarce and rare productions of nature, whoſe happineſs conſiſts in having a ſhell which no man elſe poſſeſſes, neglecting all application to uſeful knowledge.

THESE philoſophers, like the reaſoning of the ſophiſts of old, are productive of evil to ſcience and mankind; they bring a contempt on the appellation, in the opinion of many, which extends itſelf over other parts of what is diſtinguiſh'd by that name, or creating a real character and valuation in the heads of others, for

for ſuch trifles, ſeduce them from more reaſonable and worthy purſuits, and leſſen the true value of real knowledge.

ALMOST all of this ſtamp, are proud in being eſteem'd unbelievers; yet it is remarkable, that the moſt extenſive capacities have been chriſtians; Sir Iſaac, and Mr. Locke, are known to have been ſuch, but theſe men are wiſer; they have diſcover'd the ſecret behind the curtain, and being too cunning to be deluded by the falacy and art of prieſts, are only dupes to their own weakneſs and follies, a kind of *felones de ſe*, who have the great conſolation of deſtroying their happineſs by their own wrong reaſoning, as the others have their lives by their own raſh hands.

I HAVE often imagined, that amongſt men there are to be found all kinds and degrees of knowledge, which heaven has given to the other animals of the creation; the men of this kind of underſtanding, reſemble moles, who have juſt ſenſe enough to grovel in the dirt, and diſcern foſſils, it is their native ſphere; but when they emerge into day-light, are aſtoniſh'd, and judge

amiſs, from the imperfection of their organs, and full blaze of truth.

If a man would attend to the ſenſations which paſs in his own boſom, and unravel the combination of thoſe materials, with which he is compoſed, without flattering the vanity that prompts him within, he will perceive, at leaſt, I perceive it myſelf, that there are moments, hours, and days, when reaſon has no influence in correcting the diſquietude we feel, where the only ſolid rock, which offers us a firm footing, is the belief in the mediation of a celeſtial advocate, and redeemer of mankind; when the objects of religion only take place, and ſoothe the mind to a contentment with itſelf.

Can theſe feeble philoſophers calculate, how many animals are contained in a drop of fluid, admire how nicely the form of every creature is adapted to its exerciſe and employment, and not remark how truly the objects of religion are adjuſted to the various fabric of the ſoul of man; even the belief of a Mediator and Redeemer, are ſuch conſolatory ideas,

ſo fitted to the wants of human nature, that, were there no other teſtimonies and advantages in the chriſtian doctrine, I ſhould declare, that revelation came from heaven. Is honey and wax more natural and neceſſary to the bee, than ſuch expectations and dependance to human kind? Is that inſect better formed for collecting theſe productions, than the mind of man for receiving the ſuccour and belief of ſuch opinions? Is it reaſoning like man, to admire the formation of a bee, and exclaim there is a God, and then ſeeing the means, by which he has ever conducted mankind, aſſert there is none?

SUCH it is at the concluſion: if religion is an abſurdity, it is not one of thoſe tranſient things, which ſeem to obſtruct or interfere with the general proceedings of providence, like earthquakes or plagues. It is a ſtable being, the ſtandard rule and direction of man's behaviour: either religion is therefore of his hand and revelation, or there is no God. For to ſuppoſe man governed eternally by a falſehood, is to ſuppoſe that there is no ſuperin-

tending power. If they perſiſt to aſſert, that there is that power, from the works of the creation, from flies and inſects, which directs them by inſtinct to what is right, and deny the truth of religion; they own that there is a god of flies, and not of men; that the bee, and ant, are objects of his care, and man left unheeded and uncared for; either a partial deity, or oppoſed by ſome malevolent power, which reſtrains him from the exertion of his will.

THE ruling philoſophy of France is more conſentaneous to itſelf, than this in England: the materialiſts found all theſe phænomena in mental nature, as ariſing from matter alone; and tho' there have yet appeared no philoſophers amongſt them, who have traced the circulation of things, thro' the whole round of what is call'd cauſe and effect, yet they aſſign all alike to one material cauſe, and are not ſo weak and contradictory to imagine, that there is a being who preſides over inſects, and is inattentive to what paſſes amongſt men.

IT is generally ſaid, that there never was a ſpeculative Atheiſt; whether there ever have been ſuch men or not, I ſhall not take upon me to decide; yet, I am convinced that I could with more eaſe be induced to follow that philoſophy which ſuppoſes the cauſe of all things to exiſt in their own nature; that is, that the different degrees of ſubtilty in matter, and the affections of its various parts, attracting and repelling, are equal to the production of all the phænomena which we behold in nature, than acknowledging a providence, which has formed and preſides over all, exclude him from the ſuperintendancy of human kind, giving him as a god of flies and inſects, and permitting man to be guided by ſomething totally erroneous. This laſt manner of conceiving things, is that generally received by thoſe who deal in the knowledge of ſhells, and are unjuſtly named deiſts; the philoſophers of England.

THE other ſyſtem of materialiſm, is the modiſh philoſophy of France. I am neither

the follower of one or the other; but taking nature as ſhe appears, am convinced that there is a God of inſects and of men.

ADIEU, remember me in your addreſs to that being.

I am your moſt obedient,

LET-

LETTER XXII.

To the Reverend Father FABIO MARETTI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

AFTER the ſound of an inſtrument has been communicated to a place of echoes, there remains a long while ſome dying tone which the ear diſtinguiſhes, that makes it regret the loſs of the muſic which imparted it.

IN like manner, the languid ſtate of letters in this nation imparts a pain to thoſe who aſpire to be received of that number; they remember like a fine woman the full ſunſhine of their beauty, and knowing that they are ſtill agreeable, cannot bear being treated with ſlight in the declining hour, when the ſhadows are largeſt.

AT preſent, all attention is turned from ſenſe to ſound, and an Italian fiddler of note coming

from Rome, would find admiſſion and countenance, where a genius equal to Horace, travelling from the ſame place, would meet no reception.

MUSIC is the faſhionable favourite of the ladies; a fiddler is received in this country as an emiſſary from the ſkies; and I am convinced, if the ladies were to order a picture of our Saviour's being received into heaven, they would follow the Dutch taſte, only inſtead of angels playing on the violin, they would think to honor him more by the company of Italian fiddlers.

ONE of theſe gentlemen is conſidered of conſequence enough, to divide a nation into two parties in his favour. The diſtinction of Whig and Tory is almoſt at an end, and the concertiſts and operaſts will probably take their place with equal vehemence; for this nation muſt be divided by ſomething.

THE money which theſe performers get in this city is amazing; they are no longer conſidered as creatures of entertainment, but rank;

they keep better company than men of letters, and often very arrogantly refuſe playing at the houſes of great men where they have dined; how would an Italian nobleman conſider ſuch behaviour?

SO much ſound has gained on ſenſe, and the talents of one performer obtained upon thoſe of the other, that for one who ſighs after the genius of Shakeſpear, there are thouſands who pant with deſire to play like Digardino; and ſo much he profits of his ſkill, that I believe myſelf but little miſtaken, when I aſſert, that he gets as much money by his violin, as the whole number of writers in the kingdom do by their knowledge. This will in a great meaſure explain the reaſon of their being more enamoured of ſounds, than underſtanding; and preferring the modulations of an artful muſician, to the fineſt productions of the moſt vivid and juſt imagination.

PERHAPS, the ſecurity which attends criticiſm on muſic, is the great cauſe of its being promoted by the patrons of fiddlers; there are no treatiſes written on the compoſition of concertos,

certos, trios, overtures, and ſolos, as there are on heroic poems, tragedy, comedy, paſtoral, elegy, and ſatire; theſe, tho', they never impart taſte, furniſh rules which the people of pretenſion to literature apply; with theſe they combat the opinions of thoſe who have never read them, tho' probably of better taſte, and make their judgment controverted.

In muſic taſte is more arbitrary; and if a lady who has travelled into Italy, who does not know one note in the gamut, or when an inſtrument is in or out of tune, talks much of the Cantabile and Cromatic, ſhe ſhall be eſteemed a ſpirit of choice diſcernment in harmonic knowledge, and followed as blindly as the oracles which the prieſteſs of the god of muſic delivered to his votaries of old.

I have known more than one inſtance of this, I aſſure you, where a lady has been dying in raptures at the ſound of a fiddle, that was ſqueaking out of tune, and the upper part of the compoſition had no more muſic in it, than the whetting a knife, filing a ſaw, or the crying of a ſow hung by the head in the ſtye; at

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the ſame time, nine parts in ten of the company ſcrewing faces in concert and complaiſance to her ladyſhip, which would have made a ſtudy or academy for artiſts who carved heads of ſticks, or paint in Caracatura.

IT is amazing in all countries, how much pretenſion to taſte finds means of diſſipating, but no where more remarkable than in England; here are men of fortune who ſacrifice a thouſand pounds in exhibiting a tragedy, only to convince the world how ill they are made for the repreſentation of great things.

MANY a man of quality entertains the world with concerts, to ſhew that of the thouſand requiſites which are neceſſary to make a complete fiddler, he wants but two, ſtopping in tune, and playing in time; however, there was yet a more extraordinary reaſon which induced an Engliſh Jew who reſided at Paris, to give a public concert, which was to ſhew, that his lady's gallant was not an eunuch, for no human head could divine to what other intent he was deſired to ſing.

IT is become the faſhion in this city to procure charities by muſick; that power has found the way of aiding in the ſupport of hoſpitals, melting from hearts as hard as ſtone, the ſum of one guinea for a concert ticket. I imagine Amphion was an Italian fiddler, and the walls of Thebes were built much in this manner, perhaps by ſubſcription concerts; I think operas were not then in faſhion, that inſipid taſte of chanting frigid nonſenſe, thro' three acts, is an invention of the moderns, and owes its riſe to our nation.

THE genius of the Engliſh is not much turned for muſic, tho' much more ſo than that of France, faſhion makes its preſent prevalency; the converſation which is continued at concerts whilſt the fineſt pieces are performing, puts this remark beyond contradiction; or, it muſt be a ſtrange degree of ſelf-love, which prefers the ſound of its own voice, to the fineſt compoſitions of Corelli, Handel, or Geminiani.

NOTWITHSTANDING the protection and encouragement which are given to the natives of our country, I ſhould with pleaſure ſee the revival

vival of letters, and the languid flame of ſcience cheriſhed by that generous fuel, which it merits from the attention of great men; when it happens, I ſhall not fail of communicating it to your knowledge. Adieu, believe me,

Yours affectionately.

LETTER XXIII.

To the Reverend Father ANTONIO COCCHI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

THERE is nothing which the Engliſh value themſelves more upon, than their being free from thoſe ſlaviſh apprehenſions, to which ſuperſtition ſubjects the minds of men in catholic countries; they are continually deriding our belief in the power of ſaints, and wonder how human creatures can be ſo weak, as to give credit to their influence and efficacy.

To a new comer, this looks ſo much like a nation of philoſophers, that it is no wonder, ſtrangers have reported ſuch favourable ideas, in their accounts of this people; and yet acquaintance brings down all this apparent ſuperiority, to the level of that in other nations; indeed, they do not believe that the ſhrine of St. Francis, or St. Anthony, the Virgin's or ſaints relicks,

relicks, have any power of doing miraculous cures; but they believe, that one medicine can diſſipate all diſeaſes, and that a horſe-ſhoe nailed on the threſhold of the door, will keep all evil beings from the houſe.

EVEN the people of condition yield to this faith in quack remedies, and put their lives into the hands of ignorance itſelf: owing to this credulity in the people of this iſland, it is, that ſo many remedies of infallible virtue, are conſtantly advertiſed againſt all the evils which can affect the human body. In looking over the public papers, one would imagine, that the avenues of death were intirely ſtopt, and his realms in danger of receiving no more ſubjects; yet, ſuch is the event, that thouſands find a ſpeedier way to that kingdom, by theſe preventives.

HOW is the belief in one univerſal remedy founded in truth, beyond that of believing in the powers of ſaints; is it not equally the effect of enthuſiaſm or ſuperſtition? from the firſt, if the mind of the perſon affected is naturally inclined to hope, and from the latter, if inclined to fear; the love of life, and fear of death produce both.

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In truth, it is as reaſonable to believe, that the effluvia breathing from the ſhrine which incloſes the relicks of St. Francis, can cure any diſeaſe, as that a drop or pill of the ſame nature, can cure two diſeaſes ſpringing from two different cauſes, or a thouſand from ſo many cauſes, if ſo many can ſubſiſt.

Where is the greater ridicule in believing in one, more than another? or is the contempt of ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm, better founded in the Engliſh, than in the Italians? what philoſophy is there in believing impoſſibilities in medicine, more than in religion?

Thus then, the nature of the object is changed in this kingdom, but the paſſions which receive them remain; and the habits moſt prevalent in each country, make each purſuit ſeem leſs contradictory to good ſenſe.

In fact, it is the nature of the human heart to be anxious in ſickneſs, and the head to be eaſily prevailed on, by its perſwaſive ſenſations; for

for that reaſon, in religious countries the diſeaſed flies to his ſaint for ſafety and protection; and in thoſe who have none, to quack medicines; each believes, that one and the other has ſome inexplicable power of extirpating their grievance, and the believer in univerſal remedies, is as much a ſuperſtitious devotee, as he that confides in St. Anthony.

PRAY, is it more incredible that St Anthony preached to the fiſhes, and that they attended his diſcourſe, than that a miniſter has found a way to preach men into the ruin of themſelves and poſterity; or, that he can conceive it poſſible to oppoſe the invaſion of an enemy of regular troops, with thoſe who never knew the uſe of arms; yet, the latter is true to my certain knowledge.

MR. Addiſon treats with much ridicule, the believing that an image of our lady in Italy changed the poſition of our Saviour from one arm to another, to preſerve it from injury; and yet his countrymen have believed as improbable things within this laſt year.

THE favourers of a girl who had ſworn a robbery againſt an old woman, and was afterwards convicted of perjury, believed that this girl lived a month upon one pound of bread and a ſmall pitcher of water, without diminution of ſtrength; and that the old woman was at one and the ſame time in two different places, more than a hundred miles diſtant from each other; for this muſt be their belief, the old woman being proved beyond all contradiction to be at that diſtance, at the time when the other ſwore that this robbery was committed, and the advocates of the girl believed ſhe was preſent at the robbery.

PRAY, what is there more ridiculous in the Virgin's power of changing poſtures with the child, than in an old woman's being at two places at one and the ſame minute; or, how are the Italians more ridiculous in the belief of the firſt, than the Engliſh in that of the latter; I am convinced, that for one Italian who believes the ſtory of the virgin, there are twenty Engliſh who believe this of the girl and the old woman, and people of a rank where one ſhould not expect ſuch abſurd credulity:

credulity: indeed the whole nation was divided on this ridiculous ſtory of the old woman and girl, with as much zeal, as if their whole fate depended on it.

THUS then, the credulity of a nation may be as viſible and eaſily duped, where religion does not afford it objects, as where it does; and if the church does not find it proper diet, it will take it for itſelf.

I HAVE often ſmiled at the account which Dr. Middleton has given, of the conformity between pagan and catholic Rome in matters of religion; a diſcovery made long before his time, and acknowledged by our writers; it is juſt as ingenious as it would be to prove the conformity between the functions of the body of thoſe men who lived in the time of Numa, and pope Leo the tenth.

A PHILOSOPHER who knows his proper object, does not admire at, or condemn this conformity, he is convinced that human nature is ſtill the ſame in all countries; that the mind

actuated with religion cannot avoid ſhewing marks of gratitude, and being pleaſed with ſeeing the object of their adoration ſerved with incenſe, pomp, and ſplendour. To what purpoſe is all this ſatire againſt votive pieces, lighted tapers, burning perfumes, and other ceremonies of this kind; the minds of theſe people are only incited by gratitude, to actions of adoration and devotion in theſe objects of the ſenſes; it changes not eſſentials in our religion, and thoſe creatures are not capable of being led by reaſoning, to the paths which conduct to happineſs.

EVERY Engliſhman would be a philoſopher, and treat mankind as beings influenced by reaſonable motives only; than which nothing ſhews a greater deficiency in true philoſophy: the effect of which is, that the common people neglected, and uninfluenced by objects of the ſenſes, are untouched by any power of religion, and totally abandoned, as one hour's ramble in the ſtreets of London will convince the moſt incredulous.

IS it wiſer then, to ridicule and deſpiſe the reſemblances which he has recited in his epiſtle, and

leave the populace unreſtrained, than to hold their minds ſteady to their duty, by ceremonies which can have no ill tendency? As a philoſopher, Dr. Middleton muſt have agreed in the latter, and as a chriſtian he ought to have ſaid nothing, becauſe he felt no influence from that faith, it may be juſtly preſumed from his other works. I am,

Your's moſt affectionately.

LETTER XXIV.

To the Reverend Father DOMINICO MANZONI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

I AM apt to believe from what may be ſeen amongſt this people, that the love of riches always brings the ruin of a nation with it, not by the luxury, which is for the moſt part the conſequence of that deſire, but from weaning the mind from every other purſuit.

THE ſouls of thoſe people, who are actuated by this paſſion, are eternally ſeparating more and more from the univerſal maſs; they reſemble the ground which cleaves into diſtinct parts, and becomes ſterile by too much drineſs; it is thirſty, and would rob all other parts of their native dividend of moiſture.

NOTHING

NOTHING ſhould be ſo much guarded againſt by a legiſlator, as the evil effects of this love of money; this nothing can effectually do, but an univerſal belief of a future ſtate; a day of anſwering for all crimes by puniſhment, and receiving full reward for virtue.

THE ſyſtem of every legiſlator muſt be imperfect for ever, without this. No plan of government, however excellent in preventive and penal laws, can anſwer that deſign. Men may be guilty of the moſt infamous tranſactions, where no part of them can be known, but to themſelves, againſt which the fear of corporal puniſhment cannot effectuate any thing, and from the ſteady belief of religious obligation alone, any effectual check to vice, or impulſe to virtue, can be expected. Self-love in this tranſient ſtate, muſt be overcome by the ſelf-love in that of Eternity. Therefore all thoſe appear to be drivelers in philoſophy and man, who would weaken the influence of the rewards and puniſhments of another world; can it

be too much encouraged to virtue, or withheld from vice by any motives? and if puniſhment be not everlaſting, the reward which attends virtue cannot be intitled to it, becauſe each relating alike to the commiſſion of temporary evil, and temporary good, the recompence for virtue has no title to eternal rewards, more than that of vice to ever-during puniſhment. Thus, what the libertine gains by ſuppoſing the puniſhment is not eternal in the other world, the pious and devout ſoul loſes by the thoughts of his happineſs being limited in its duration, when this life is at an end: at the ſame time, motives to virtue are enfeebled on both ſides the queſtion, by ſuſtaining, that puniſhment hereafter cannot be everlaſting, and the two moſt animating paſſions of the human heart, are leſſen'd in their force and operation, hope, and fear.

THE truth of this is manifeſtly ſeen in the practice of all the common people of this city.

ONE would be led to imagine, that it was the avow'd ſcheme of the miniſtry in this kingdom, to

to deſtroy all incentive to virtue, or reſtraint from vice. Every man that is not of the eſtabliſh'd church, is obliged to take the ſacrament as an oath of his conformity to it, before he can accept any office under the government; not that they who oblige him, expect he ſhould keep it any more, than he intends adhering to this moſt ſacred obligation, at the moment of his taking it.

By this action, the minds of men being robb'd of that uniting principle of integrity, which holds them firmly together, are more eaſily invaded by all future attacks from the ſide of intereſt, and open to corruption; the firſt breach makes way for the inroad of every ſucceeding vice.

The common people of London, who are indeed ſubjected to no powers, but the ſecular, are moſt heinous inſtances of the miſchiefs which the neglect of religious motives brings on a nation. There is at preſent nothing however, impoſſible according to the rules of common nature, that numberleſs witneſſes may not be brought

brought to ſwear for ſmall ſums of money; every trial gives inſtances, ſhocking to human nature, of this contempt of the name of God.

THE regard paid to money, being the only thing conſider'd as eſſentially good amongſt the greateſt, without regard to the perfections, or excellencies of the mind, it is become a received maxim, that by whatever means riches can be obtain'd, poſſeſſion obliterates all ſhame belonging to it.

THUS the terrors of another world being totally annihilated, the moſt monſtrous crimes are every day committed; the effect of the fear of death in theſe inſtances is loſt, and that ſtrong reſtraint from evil, ſo natural to human minds, the pain of ſhame, is totally eradicated.

WHAT ſting has death to thoſe who never reflect on futurity, and live unhappy lives? What puniſhment is ſhame to ſouls, which have loſt the ſenſe of it.

THE two great engines of government in this kingdom, are render'd uſeleſs, religion, and the ſenſe of ſhame: to ſo deteſtable a degree the affair of perjury is arrived, that the legiſlator, who ought to make and preſerve laws againſt that moſt deſtructive of all evils to human ſociety, is the very perſon who bribes them to that iniquity; the very means which lead to the obtaining the higheſt honors are proſtituting the minds of the electors to the guilt of perjury. If miniſters are to anſwer for the good they omit doing; what have thoſe to anſwer, who are deſtroying all diſtinction between *fas* and *nefas*; conſiderations of the higheſt import to the well-being of mankind.

THEY exclaim vehemently againſt ruling the mind by religious awe, it is all ſuperſtition and ſlavery; the catholic potentates, who keep men to their duty, by the influence of prieſts and church-power, are all a ſet of moſt infamous men; it is a tyranny over the conſcience, which a free agent ſhould not bear; a flagitious practice of ſtripping and deluding the

the poor people of their effects, and right of thinking for themselves.

THIS has been the constant cry ever since the revolution; but is it a national good, or more honest and virtuous in a minister to destroy all obligation from religion, and setting the kingdom loose from the regards which it owes to heaven and earth; putrify the minds of a whole people, by the taint of one universal bribery, and corruption.

IF in Italy their governors keep mankind too strict to their duty, and more in subjection than they ought; if the fears and hopes of futurity influence too much, and subject them to their ecclesiastical power beyond what nature can bear and be easy, and liberty is too much infringed by restraints; there is yet a million times more mischief done in this country, by the whole bond of human nature being broken, and men encouraged by public bribery, to the commission of that which corrupts the mind entirely.

IF liberty conſiſt in the ſecurity of property, what ſecurity can any man have for what he poſſeſſes, or for his own life, when perjury is openly encouraged? Will thoſe who are guilty of avow'd and public perjuries, once in ſeven years, be men of integrity all the other intervening time? Liberty therefore is more infringed by this habitude of licentious indulgence, than by all the reſtraint from eccleſiaſtic power; the ſole difference lies in this: the natives of England think that the Italians are cajoled into ſlavery, and loſs of their property, by prieſts; and here the miniſter buys them like oxen in the market, to their own ſlaughter. The latter may be more pleaſing, but the people are ſlaves alike.

THIS is the preſent mode of ruling in England; and from ſuch proceedings, what can be expected, but goals fill'd with felons; highways and public ſtreets ſwarming with thieves and beggars, and the gallows groaning beneath the crowds of thoſe that are executed: the miniſters firſt try every way to take off the effects

fects of ſhame, and fear of death, and then wonder that men plunder and are hang'd.

A DAY of execution here is attended with as much pleaſure, as a ſhew of gladiators was in old Rome; the contempt of death is as much applauded by the populace in this action as in the other, or *ſi ſic pro patria concidiſſet*: It communicates no more terror to the ſpectators, than the ſlaughtering a bull. The frequency of the celebration of the hanging-feaſt, as it is call'd, has made it as little aweful as the ſelling dead ſheep in the ſhambles; the populace have rank'd it amongſt the diſeaſes of life, and think it no more unnatural to die of a rope and an executioner, than of a doctor and a fever.

PERHAPS you will be apt to impute much of this cauſe to neglect in the clergy of this country; ſome there may be, but the cry againſt the church-power is ſo great, and the ſin of popery ſo readily imputed to thoſe who would do their duty this way, by the diſſenters, that I know not, whether they may with ſafety ſet about an innovation of this kind.

NOTHING is more amazing to my apprehenſion, than that a nation which has ſtruggled

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ſo nobly againſt former invaſions of their rights, ſhould now ſo tamely ſee themſelves ſold in their elections of repreſentatives, by the worſt and loweſt of mankind, to him alone that is only more deſpicable.

DURING the laſt elections, inſtead of preventing the ruin of their country, or lamenting its forlorn condition; the whole attention was taken up about the two tryals, of an old beggar-woman, and an infamous young girl. It recall'd to my mind the ſtate of the Athenian people in the time of Demoſthenes, and the pictures he has given of them in his philipics.

WHATEVER be the event of its preſent condition, I am not gifted with the art of divination, ſufficient to penetrate; but at preſent it reſembles thoſe inſects, which are near the moment of a new metamorphoſis; but whether an eagle or a moth, a creature that ſhall face the ſun, or be doom'd to perpetual darkneſs only, a few years muſt diſcover, as it is at this hour it cannot long remain.

I am yours moſt affectionately.

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LETTER XXV.

To the Reverend Father ANGELO BONCARO *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

THE various ſects which fill this iſle, reſemble the ark of Noah in every thing but one; they are almoſt as numerous as the whole race of living things, but ſome of them ſcarce ſeem to be of God's creation.

IF they muſt be imputed to that cauſe, they ſeem rather to ſhew us the excellency of ſome by the depravity of others, as vice exhibits virtue in its fulleſt glory, a ſtorm endears the hours of ſunſhine, or an earthquake enhances the value of the ſteady courſe of nature.

METHINKS chriſtianity has been tax'd by the men of pretended reaſon, with a fault, which in fact ought to have been conſider'd as an excellency by them; from its promulgation have ſprung as many different ſects, as philoſophies from

from that which was call'd reaſon; ſhould not this analogy have made the enquirers into truth and nature, as it is call'd, determine in its favour rather than the contrary, and have won them to its party, rather than driven them to the oppoſite; reſemblance in other things, generally creates eſteem where we have liked one before: In this however it makes an objection.

OF all the opinions that ſeem to prevail in this nation, that which is reckon'd the moſt abſtruſe and deep, is that of fatality, and the moſt readily adapted, for reaſons which may be eaſily ſuggeſted.

IF I ſhould enter into a thorough diſquiſition on this ſubject, it would carry me too far for the limits of a letter; beſides, I have no other intent at preſent than to remark, that there is in the human mind, a power of examining, comparing, and combining ideas, which is not in machines; and that if all actions ſpring from fatality, yet there is ſomething in the fatality of one, which is not to be ſeen in the fatality

of the other. Otherwiſe there ſeems to be no more excellence in Homer than in a clock; the mind of the firſt from internal ſprings and weights, or other material cauſes, as neceſſarily points to the thoughts, which combined, make ſuch charming pictures to the reader's imagination, as the latter does to the hour, and the man ſpeaks as mechanically at ſpeaking time, as the clock does at the revolution of the hours at ſtriking time; whence do we admire the fatality in one, and not the other, if each is equally fatal?

If this be true, it really ſeems odd that it ſhould; however, if we ſuppoſe all is mechaniſm and neceſſity, we muſt yet accede to this, that this machine has a power of combining, ſeparating, comparing, and diſtinguiſhing ideas, and of examining its own powers, which is not to be found in thoſe of the human contrivance. This no fataliſt can deny, and perhaps theſe faculties will probably amount to ſomething adequate to the idea of freedom.

THAT man ſhould be acquainted with his own fabric, is a thing that cannot be denied by any one, if he intends to regulate his motions at all.

THIS ſyſtem of fatality then, tends to make man unacquainted with his own powers; it not only deſtroys as far as it influences all moral and religious motives, but effaces the knowledge of ourſelves. Philoſophers in this ſyſtem proceed no farther, than that every effect has its cauſe, and therefore every thing is neceſſary; that as preſcience muſt be an attribute of the deity, preſcience includes a certainty of all things being determined as they are, or there can be no preſcience; therefore a fatality decides in all things. Here their philoſophy reſts, conſidering all things as predeſtined; thus growing inactive they ſearch no farther into the compoſition and operation of this machine: does not this tend to deſtroy the very knowledge of human kind? It cannot be denied, I think, that we have a power of examining ourſelves; this makes part of fatality then, if all is fatal.

LET us for once conceive that every faculty of the mind acts mechanically, as in a machine which is kept going by weights and ſprings; the paſſions are the weights and ſprings which put it in motion, reaſon the pendulum, which balances and corrects the force of the former, and regulates its movements; beſides theſe, that the ſenſes, faith, imagination, and all the large family of the various faculties, have their cauſes to put them into action, and that there is in ſome minds a power of examining all; in this, man differs at leaſt, from the machines of man's invention.

AS in the ſtudy of mechanics, the perſon who beſt knows the powers of ſprings, weights, wheels, and levers, and the reſult which follows their combination, will certainly be the moſt expert machinic; and he who has never applied to this ſtudy will have infinite difficulties to ſurmount, in the making the leaſt inſtrument of a complex nature; yet each under the ſame power of neceſſity:

So

'So in like manner the philoſopher, tho' a fataliſt, who intends making any progreſs in the knowledge of the human mind, ſhould attempt the diſcovering thoſe objects which influence and affect every part of it, and not reſt in the lazy inattentive ſtate of fatality, without enquiring into the motives which ſet the different parts of this various machine into motion.'

IN the conſtruction of watches and clocks, he that knows that the elaſticity of ſteel renders it fit for making ſprings, that it will re-act after being acted upon, that a ſwinging weight will regulate theſe motions, has gained already two the moſt eſſential parts towards the fabricating theſe machines; when he finds alſo, that different powers of the ſpring make watches go faſter or ſlower; that length of pendulum influences greatly in the motions of a clock, tho' all theſe differences are found by experience to be ſo many fatalities, yet, after they are known, he makes a more certain uſe of them, than if they were not ſo, and applies all theſe properties to his own advantage; and tho' influenced

by neceſſity, has a faculty of combining theſe powers.

In like manner, a fataliſt, I mean a philoſopher, who knows the mind of man, and how it is affected, ſhould apply the motives which influence the various faculties of the ſoul; thoſe things which act neceſſarily according to his ſcheme, on our hopes, fears, and other paſſions; faith ſhould have its proper objects to direct it right; the ſenſes be influenced in like manner, operating for the general good; the imagination be affected by the dazzle and delight of future glory; and laſtly, the eſoteric doctrine ſhould be that of reaſon, not that limited view of theſe philoſophers at preſent, which excludes all the parts we have already mentioned, ſenſe, faith, paſſions and imagination, from their ſyſtem, as if they contained nothing true; but that of knowing and acknowledging that all things are true, to thoſe faculties which apprehend them, and that the only right reaſon is that, which conceiving man thus formed, and allowing things to be thus conſtituted, goes along with the ſtream of nature in the conduct of the world, acknowledging all theſe

parts to make the whole of man, and enter into the reaſon of the univerſe.

NECESSITY taken in this way would have, in its effect, little difference from free-will and liberty; perhaps, tho' philoſophers ſee it not in this view, this is the way nature proceeds; and on this plan a philoſopher would form his ſyſtem of governing mankind, if he was truly inſtructed in the knowledge of that fatality he pretended to underſtand.

THE man who truly comprehends the nature of his own exiſtence, would deſtine to every part of the ſoul its proper object, and forming the exacteſt computation of the powers of all the faculties of the mind, not as they ſtand in himſelf, but in all nature as far as he could penetrate, adapt the objects fitted to each perception, and proportioned to the degrees of them in all nature. To the loweſt underſtandings as well as the higheſt, that each might find its object and influence in governing and regulating the actions of mankind.

FAITH, ſo natural to men of all capacities, eſpecially the meaneſt, the million, muſt be fixed on proper objects; the paſſions animated by particular circumſtances, or reſtrained by others in the articles of belief; the ſenſes awakened and touched by the viſible repreſentations of their creed; the mind induced to conſider highly of the power believed in, by pomp and worſhip, and tokens of reverence and gratitude; the weakneſs of human nature indulged in the hopes of a redeemer and mediator, between a ſoul ſunk to nothing by its vices in its own conſideration, and that being of their worſhip all purity and perfection; the imagination warmed by the objects of another world, combining the whole ſum of mental pleaſures and ſupreme delights; and laſtly, reaſon ſhould behold all theſe right in nature, as wheels, weights, ſprings, and their powers are in machines, with no greater proof of the truth of the laſt, than of the firſt, experience only; which teaches us that theſe are natural to man, without which ſagaciouſly adjuſted, he can no more be governed and go right,

right, than a clock can meaſure time. Chriſtianity certainly embraces the whole ſyſtem of truth to mental nature, neceſſary if the fataliſt pleaſes, proceeding from the will of God, in the opinion of thoſe who acknowledge a free-will; but in both manners of conſidering it, equally true with all other things, and equally adapted to our well-being, as rain and ſunſhine to fruit and flowers.

THUS, Sir, I have been led I know not how into this metaphyſical reſearch, to ſhew you that the ſyſtem of fatality, as it is generally received, tends to deſtroy the knowledge of men, and would effect it, if even neceſſity in all the faculties did not lay claim to its right; fatality in the hands of a man of genius would then be directed much to the ſame purpoſes, with thoſe of a man who acknowledged the doctrine of free-will: let me tell you, that the philoſophers of England are extremely deficient in this ſyſtem; they allow that all exiſts from neceſſity, and yet, that religion is a falſe and deſtructive inſtitution, when this muſt have the ſame title to be right and true, with all the moſt favourite truths of their reaſon and ſyſtem; its ſpringing from ſome cauſe

cauſe which is neceſſary, and it has always made part of the ſyſtem of nature and government of men; thus, their philoſophy and neglect of their religion, tend alike at preſent to the ruin of national government. I am,

Your moſt obedient,

LET-

LETTER XXVI.

To the Counteſs of ***** *at* Rome.

Madam,

WHAT you have been told with reſpect to the Engliſh ladies, and women in general, is true; they have an external neatneſs in their dreſs, which is to be ſeen in no other nation upon earth; that part of apparel which is called an apron, unknown to your country, and which I know no way of deſcribing to you, but by referring you, like a mathematician to his diagram, to that little jointed baby which I ſend you with this, by Mr.———. This figure is dreſt in the night-gown of England, which being often white, handkerchiefs and caps, as you will ſee, all of the ſame hue, give an air of cleanlineſs beyond imagination.

THIS dreſs, with their hats on in the public walks, communicates to a ſtranger the moſt pleaſing ſenſation, a kind of paſtoral delight, a

ſcene

ſcene of old Arcadia, or like ſome of Watteau's pictures in the rural kind.

In Paris the women have quite another air in their motions, looks, dreſs, and behaviour, they impart a grace of a very ſuperior nature, ſuch as becomes perſons of the higheſt rank in the ſpecies; in London, the women of quality have much of the ſhepherdeſs mein, or rather inclining to ſomething leſs modeſt, the nymphs of the town; this air I preſume theſe ladies affect for a moral purpoſe, that by this artifice all kinds of characters in women looking alike, the men ſhall be afraid to accoſt any of them, leſt peradventure, they ſhould meet a virtuous woman and be rejected with contempt. Thus the dames of avowed pleaſure are prevented from exerting all their miſchief, by being mixt with and undiſtinguiſhable from thoſe of profeſſed virtue, as the ſame quantity of poiſon diffuſed thro' a large maſs of matter, is leſs likely to kill, than in its unmixed ſtate; or, wine leſs apt to intoxicate when it is diffuſed in water, than when taken alone; this policy you muſt allow to be admirable in favour of virtue and chaſtity, amongſt the ladies of England.

YET I am afraid, madam, that in dreſs, the ſame objection lies againſt the ladies of London, that they ſay lies againſt the religion of the Italians; the external ſhow and parade may be greater, but the parts concealed are more neglected, than in the regions of Italy.

A MAN of my character and function, muſt be ſuppoſed to ſpeak all this from hearſay only, and not knowledge; and I aſſure you, the gentlemen who have viſited the kingdoms on the the other ſide of the Alps, tell me, that the hidden corners are kept cleaner by our ladies, than by thoſe of England, and internal purity makes ample amends for external appearance.

THIS I think, is but reaſonable in thoſe ladies, if they were as elegantly neat beneath as above, they would like ſo many Calypſos charm all mankind, and confine them to this iſland; but they are moderate in their deſires, and cheriſh ſome hidden diſguſt on purpoſe not to diſpeople other realms, or, at leaſt, make them all ſo many nations of Amazons without a man amongſt them.

THE

THE perſons of Engliſh women are certainly very fine, their complexions, ſhapes, and proportions very pleaſing and attractive; yet they are extremely deficient, not only in that which I have already mentioned, but in another internal conſideration; they do not give their minds all that beauty, which grace adds to ſentiment, and are infinitely leſs pleaſing in converſation, than the ladies of Italy or France.

THUS, tho' they eaſily captivate, their chains are too feeble to hold their captives long in dependance; they think of no more than the moments of delight, and leave the hours of indifference unprovided for, that is, they decorate their perſons, and neglect their underſtandings.

THUS it happens, that when poſſeſſion has ſtript the veil, which love throws over all parts of its objects, unleſs thoſe deſtined for the eye; a new ſcene appears, and all the undiſcovered parts of perſon, in mind and diſpoſition, now put into the oppoſite ſcale, weigh down the former, which like gold becomes lighter by wearing.

IT

IT is to this neglect in England alſo, that the ladies of France and Italy find ſuch praiſes in the mouths of Engliſh travellers; indeed it is owing to a falſe notion in this nation, of ſuppoſing women unfit for converſation, that it has ſo long prevailed; whereas, in truth, their underſtandings are as good as thoſe of the ladies of any nation, and the converſation as brilliant, of all thoſe who have been bred to the uſe and exertion of their faculties.

THE chief reaſon that women are leſs eſteemed here than in France, is, that the education of youth tends naturally to keep them from their company; from ſchool they go to the univerſities, the law, or phyſic, and are under the tuition of men till three or four and twenty; whereas, a young gentleman in France comes from the college at thirteen or fourteen, and is immediately delivered over to the care and ſuperintendency of ſome woman of quality, practiſed in the ways of love, men, and gallantry.

HERE he learns every qualification neceſſary to accompliſh a young gentleman, for the ſupreme

preme art and myſteries of love; he is inſtructed in all the falacies and deceits of women; the artifices and devices of men; the whole attack and defence of the ſex; when being accompliſh'd, he is let looſe, not to make war, but love, on the females of Paris.

FROM this it is, that the gentlemen of France always think ladies the moſt deſireable companions for converſation, and the women are ſtill inſtructed by teaching, as preceptors become more expert by having pupils.

A WOMAN in England is the momentary toy of paſſion. In France the companion, in the hours of reaſon and converſation, as well as in thoſe of love; the ſentimental makes the greateſt part of the delight: a female of France would bluſh at the gothic joys which an Engliſhman only thinks of, and pretend at leaſt to fly his arms and converſation.

IN truth, they ſupply the void of love with much art; and if they do not foſter a genuine paſſion, they ſupport an artificial one ſo perfectly,

fectly, that all ſeems eaſy and natural. A woman in England, in general, ſcorns diſguiſe; ſhe will have the whole heart, or nothing; and deteſts the ghoſt of a lover, as every thing is call'd but fleſh and blood. Indeed the moſt polite men and their wives have learnt to be civil of late, without caring ſix-pence for each other. To recompence the loſs of theſe qualities, however amiable, it muſt be avow'd that virtue is the due praiſe of Engliſh wives; and were the men half ſo ſteady to their country's good, as their ladies are to their honor, no nation could boaſt more illuſtrious natives.

WITHOUT doubt there are fewer corrupt married woman in this nation, than in any in Europe where women have ſo much liberty; and huſbands have juſtly more reliance on them, than in any other country. Confidence creates honor, and the liberty of chooſing thoſe they love has preſerved their virtue; but the time approaches, and the law is talk'd of, which muſt in ſome time bring them on a level in levity with other women of Europe: it is determined, that neither honor in man, nor virtue in

woman, ſhall be longer encouraged in this iſle; that ſince the naturalization of the off-caſt of all nations cannot take place at preſent, the expulſion of every virtue may, in order to pave the road for that glorious deſign. In all probability, madam, a few years, if a law which reſtrains young people from being wedded to their choices, ſhould be paſs'd, the Engliſh ladies may be as remarkable for having as much cleanlineſs, and as little chaſtity, as thoſe of Italy or any other country.

THEIR gallantries and intrigues may make them as ſentimental, and refined, as either the French or Italians; and the loſs of one virtue, (indeed it is a capital one) be amply recompenced by the acquiſition of five hundred hypocriſies. This is a thing to be dreaded by the women of all other nations: if beauty makes the females of England already a formidable rival to the French power in that particular, in oppoſition to internal cleanlineſs, ſpirit of converſation, cajoling, and intrigue; what will it effect when it has acquired all theſe powerful additions?

I TREM-

I TREMBLE for the continent, and verily believe, that this which appears a deſign of extirpating female virtue, is in truth a deep-laid ſcheme to conquer the French in their own way, and declaring a new kind of war, where the powers are female.

IN what a ſtrange light do vulgar eyes behold things! how often are miniſters calumniated by the tongue of malice and malediction! what can ſhew the genius of a ſtateſman to ſo much advantage, as this ſingle ſtroke in policy, if it takes place? where, after having exhauſted the nation's treaſure fruitleſsly in war, and mortgaged its honeſt inhabitants to public plunderers, he diſcovers a new way of raiſing the reputation of his country, by aboliſhing all female honor as much as he can, on purpoſe to oppoſe the gallantries, intrigues, and adulteries of this nation, againſt thoſe of France, and thus beat them at their own weapons in a new kind of war. I am told, by this he expects to be as much famed for ſpreading the powers of vice every where, and conquering the virtues of both ſexes,

as the Duke of Marlborough was renown'd for ſubduing the enemies of the crown of England. Alas! I tremble for the grand monarch. I am,

Madam,

Your moſt obedient,
and moſt humble ſervant.

End of the FIRST VOLUME.

00083707

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 July, 2018